

The Vision Accounts in the Book of Ezekiel as Interrelated Narratives:

A Redaction-Critical and Theological Study

Janina Maria Hiebel, Dipl.Theol.

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Janina Hiebel

Abstract

The strong connections between the vision accounts in the book of Ezekiel are a well-known fact. However, in the literature their existence is usually simply mentioned. To date, the question of how, when, and by whom (author or redactor) these links were created has attracted very little attention. The present thesis undertakes a redaction-critical study of Ez 1:1–3:15 (3:22–27); 8:1–11:25; 37:1–14; 40:1–43:11; 44:1–2, 4–6; 47:1–12 as interrelated narratives.

The aim of the first part of the thesis is to outline a unified redaction history of all vision accounts in their mutual relationship. The study begins with the diachronic analysis of Ez 1:1–3:15; 8–11; 37:1–14; 40–48* separately, discerning an oldest version and the respective redaction history for each text unit, along with a structural-literary analysis of every major stage of the text's growth. The redaction histories are then combined, establishing the chronological order of the layers and, where applicable, their correlation or dependence. Four original vision accounts (2:3–3:15*; 8–11*; 37:1–14*; 40:1–43:10*) and two isolated disputation words (11:3–4, 7–12; 11:14–20*) are attributed to the early-exilic prophet Ezekiel. The four accounts are already at this stage arranged in two interlinked pairs. The insertion of a new "overture" (1:1–2:2*; 3:12–14*) creates particular connections among 1:1–3:15*; 8–11* and 40–48*, and thus a cycle of 3+1 visions, leading from doom to salvation. The links continue to increase in quantity and explicitness, until reaching the present tightly-knit network.

Redaction criticism ultimately should serve to facilitate a better understanding of the text. For this reason, the thesis is complemented by a shorter second part. Based on the first, it surveys aspects of the visions' discourse, rhetoric, and theology — for example, the portrayal of characters, their relationships to each other and to the (historic) audience, the implied ideas of God and of humankind — in their development from the original vision accounts throughout selected redactional layers. To this end, a range of questions and methods is borrowed from narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism. In this way, redaction-critical analysis and literary methods that are typically used in a synchronic approach, work together on elucidating both the history and theology of some of the most complex chapters in the book of Ezekiel.

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
Anton	<i>Antonianum</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ATD	Altes Testament Deutsch
ATSAT	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovanensium
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation
BiLitS	Bible and Literature series
BJSUC	Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BTCB	Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible
BTSst	Biblich-Theologische Studien
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament Series
ConcC	Concordia Commentary: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture
<i>CurBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
<i>CurBS</i>	<i>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</i>
EdF	Erträge der Forschung
EHS	Europäische Hochschulschriften
<i>ETR</i>	<i>Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses</i>
<i>EvTh</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FzB	Forschung zur Bibel
GAT	Grundrisse zum Alten Testament
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IOSOT	The International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament
ITC	International Theological Commentary
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBQ</i>	<i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>

JBVO	Jenaer Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHScr</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
JaLin	Janua Linguarum
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement series
KSbT	Kohlhammer Studienbücher Theologie
LHB/OTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies (formerly JSOTSup)
LiPTB	Linzer Philosophisch-Theologische Beiträge
LXXCS	Septuagint Commentary Series
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
NCB	New Century Bible
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
NIB	The New Interpreter's Bible
NIBCOT	New International Biblical Commentary Old Testament Series
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NSKAT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar Altes Testament
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
<i>OTE</i>	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
PEGLBS	Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society
PFES	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
PrTMS	Princeton Theological Monograph Series
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RIBLA</i>	<i>Revista de Interpretación Bíblica Latino-americana</i>
RRBS	Recent Research in Biblical Studies
SANE	Sources from the Ancient Near East
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLANEM	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Near East Monographs
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBLWAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SHBC	Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SKKAT	Stuttgarter kleiner Kommentar Altes Testament
StBL	Studies in Biblical Literature
SubBi	Subsidia Biblica
TB	Theologische Bücherei
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
ThBC	Theological Bible Commentary
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>

TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TWOT	Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WBComp	Westminster Bible Companion
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WoBC	Women's Bible Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YOSR	Yale Oriental Series, Researches
ZABR	<i>Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

<i>hiph.</i>	<i>hiph'il</i>
<i>ni.</i>	<i>niph'al</i>
<i>pi.</i>	<i>pi'el</i>

OT	Old Testament
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
Q	Qumran Text
S	Peshitta (Syriac)
T	Targum (Aramaic)
V	Vulgate

NB: Dates such as “sixth century,” “587” etc. generally are understood as “before common era”; the abbreviation BCE is not repeated each time. Where “common era” is meant, “CE” is added to the date.

1. Introduction

1.1 *Ezekiel and His Visions*

“The prophecy of Ezekiel is a vast canvas of unearthly strangeness and beauty, filled with powerful images that at once fascinate and confound the interpreter. It is a difficult work by any standards...”¹ In fact, Ezekiel is not one of those biblical books whose beauty and value catch the eye immediately. It is distinguished by an idiosyncratic, repetitious language with plenty of *hapax legomena* but with little human warmth and emotion (and no indication of divine love). Its eccentric and oftentimes violent imagery has had the prophet diagnosed with almost everything from repressed sexuality to drug abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder. There are chapters that once were forbidden for anyone under thirty, and there are others that moral concern might define as X-rated.² This is not to mention the immense cultural gap that generally separates us from a sixth-century-BCE Judean in Babylonia. Ezekiel truly is a challenge on all levels, and certainly “not the book with which you would begin, if you wanted to interest a newcomer in the Old Testament.”³

Having said this, we may add that the book of Ezekiel is also known as the best-structured prophetic book in the Old Testament, the most unified as regards language and layout. It is commonly recognized that, among other factors, the vision accounts contribute greatly to this impression of unity – most of all the three largest, 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48, but also 37:1-14 and 3:22-27. This is because the visions share

¹ Steven Tuell, “The Temple Vision of Ezekiel 40-48: A Program for Restoration?,” in PEGLBS (Grand Rapids: Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society, 1982), 96.

² Ezek 1, the chapter of the “Chariot,” along with Ezek 40-48, is considered as dangerous in the Babylonian Talmud (b. Ḥag. 13a) and the Mishnah (m. Meg. 4:10; m. Ḥag. 2:1). Cited e.g. in Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, second ed., LHB/OTS 482 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 50f. In modern times, Feminist Criticism in particular has taken offence at the sexually explicit Chapters 16 and 23, which were criticized as pornographic and “seriously problematic” (ibid., 59 names Darr, Exum, and Moughtin-Mumby).

³ H. Wheeler Robinson, *Two Hebrew Prophets: Studies in Hosea and Ezekiel* (London: Lutterworth, 1948), 70. In other words, “Ezekiel is exactly the sort of book some Christians have in mind when they complain about the Old Testament being dark, violent and confusing.” Steven Shawn Tuell, *Ezekiel*, NIBCOT (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2009), 1.

a certain terminology and key motifs and even refer explicitly to each other. Read in sequence, they tell a story from the commission of Ezekiel, through the departure of the Glory of YHWH out of the defiled temple in Jerusalem, up to YHWH's return into a new temple.

The strong interrelatedness of the vision accounts raises questions. For example: Is this original, or else, how was it created? What theology underlies the sequence of vision accounts? These and other questions call for an in-depth investigation, especially as there is a marked lacuna in publications on the topic.⁴

Yet the primary attraction to the book of Ezekiel, in my case, is his time: one of the most fascinating and dramatic periods in the history of ancient Israel. For, with the majority of contemporary scholars, I generally believe the book's claims that at its origin stood a man of priestly family and education who was deported to Babylonia, together with young king Jehoiachin and Jerusalem's elite, in 598/597; a decade prior to the ultimate defeat of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple.⁵ Even though some scholars have doubted this socio-historical setting,⁶ it still

⁴ See the literature review below.

⁵ On the history of the last years of the kingdom of Judah and on the Babylonian Exile, see e.g. T. C. Mitchell, "Judah Until the Fall of Jerusalem (700-586 B.C.)" and "The Babylonian Exile and the Restoration of the Jews in Palestine (586-500 B.C.)," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. John Boardman, et al. (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 397-409, 410-429; Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, *A Biblical Theology of Exile*, OBT (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 27-73; Rainer Albertz, "Die Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels 587 v. Chr: Historische Einordnung und religionspolitische Bedeutung," in *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels: Geschehen - Wahrnehmung - Bewältigung*, ed. Johannes Hahn, WUNT 147 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 23-39; *Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.*, trans. David Green, StBL 3 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Oded Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005) as well as most Ezekiel commentaries.

⁶ The first to radically question the sixth-century setting was Charles Cutler Torrey, *Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Original Prophecy*, YOSR 18 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930); more recent examples are Joachim Becker, *Der priesterliche Prophet: Das Buch Ezechiel 1-48*, SKKAT 12 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1971); Karin Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie im Ezechielbuch: Ein Beitrag zur Konzeption alttestamentlicher Prophetie*, FAT 36 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); Anja Klein, *Schriftauslegung im Ezechielbuch: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Ez 34-39*, BZAW 391 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008); and Matthijs J. de Jong, "Biblical Prophecy - A Scribal Enterprise: The Old Testament Prophecy of Unconditional Judgement Considered as a Literary Phenomenon," *VT* 61 (2011). Ezekiel's exilic location was disbelieved e.g. by Volkmar Hertrich, *Ezechielprobleme*, BZAW 61 (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1932); George Ricker Berry, "The Composition of the Book of Ezekiel," *JBL* 58 (1939); and William

explains best the stylistic-linguistic, iconographic and theological peculiarities of Ezekiel and sheds the most light on the content of his prophecies. It is equally evident that the book was written by more than one author, even though the redactors were obviously intent on copying the original style and had similar theological ideas⁷ – much to the despair of diachronically working exegetes.

Hence Ezekiel, as the first author of the correspondent book, is situated at the beginning of the Babylonian Exile – at the very point where the old political and religious systems collapse and new ones are yet to be born.

The Book of Ezekiel is the answer to profound questions. Why has this happened to us? Who are we? Do we have a future? Will we go home again? Born out of devastation, horror, and loss, these questions demand answers. They thunder with outrage, they moan with despair, they cry out with grief from a world torn apart, and taken away. No fact is more important for reading the Book of Ezekiel than this: the book is an effort to respond to the devastating experience of exile, to answer these questions and a thousand more. The basic question, the question which must be answered, the question which tears at hearts and minds and souls, is the most difficult of all. Where is God in all of this?⁸

In other words, how to make sense of the disaster with the theological tools available from the crumbling traditional faith? These questions illustrate that the political, cultural and theological crisis of the Babylonian Exile was likely to lead to the extinguishing of Judean cultural and religious identity.⁹ That this did not happen is merited in part to the teachings of Ezekiel, as he was able to interpret the catastrophic events in a meaningful way and to lay the foundations of an enduring

Hugh Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, WBC 28 (Waco: Word Books, 1986). Presently, Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann doubts both (see below, 1.2.1.2).

⁷ Because of this relative homogeneity and because Cyrus and the Persian kingdom are not mentioned, it is often assumed that the book was fundamentally completed during the Babylonian Exile; however there are also indications for some later, post-exilic additions.

⁸ Kalinda Rose Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation: The Territorial Rhetoric of Ezekiel 40-48*, SBLDS 154 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 1. In view of exilic literature in general, Ralph Klein concludes, “Israel’s exilic theologians made the most of their disaster. They spoke to the types of questions that challenge academic theologians, the clergy, and the nonprofessional faithful also today.” Ralph W. Klein, *Israel in Exile: A Theological Interpretation*, OBT [6] (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 7f.

⁹ The crisis provoked by the Babylonian Exile and the dynamics of dealing with it are excellently summarized in John Austin Baker, *The Foolishness of God* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970), 27-31.

hope. While many parts of the book of Ezekiel deal with those questions (as do, of course, other works of exilic literature), they are present in the vision accounts in a condensed form and impressive imagery. On an experiential-theological level, the visions in Ezekiel express in images what constitutes the deepest dimension of an existential crisis: the experience of being abandoned by God. They sketch out, in radically theological terms, a retrospective explanation for the disaster, as well as a prospective hope for restoration afterwards. They illustrate the anguish and violence at the beginning of the Babylonian Exile, but beyond that, they depict the intuition that something entirely new may come from the crisis.

For these reasons, a thorough study of the vision accounts in Ezekiel, with a focus on their redaction history, as well as from a theological viewpoint, seems a worthwhile endeavour. Before outlining the methods and the composition of this thesis, I shall begin by reviewing the existing literature.

1.2 Literature Review

Since the beginnings of historical-critical exegesis, much has been written on the prophet Ezekiel and on the book that bears his name. The number of perspectives and points of interest on Ezekiel is, as with any biblical book, nearly infinite. This literature review will begin by outlining the general tendencies in current Ezekiel scholarship with regard to redaction criticism. This will serve as a backdrop for the subsequent presentation of literature on the four major vision accounts, Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8:1-11:25; 37:1-14; 40:1-48:35. A selection has been made to include only publications discussing the vision accounts in terms of their redaction history. Moreover, save for few exceptions, this review embraces only writings published

after 1969, i.e. after the completion of Zimmerli's commentary.¹⁰ The survey will conclude with the scarce examples of literature focussing specifically on the interrelation of all, or several, vision accounts in Ezekiel.¹¹

1.2.1 Redaction Criticism and the Book of Ezekiel

Due to the homogeneous character of the book, redaction criticism on Ezekiel began relatively late, well into the twentieth century. GUSTAV HÖLSCHER's study of 1924¹² is typically seen as the first important critical work. Nonetheless, once critical interpretation was initiated, it soon arrived at extreme and mutually contradictory positions; few redaction-critical models could claim to represent something like a consensus. Perhaps it is safe to affirm that the prevalent contemporary positions regarding the genesis of the book of Ezekiel can be grouped into three main approaches:

- a model of subsequent expansions of Ezekiel's writings by a "school" or group of disciples, essentially during the exile and in continuity with the prophet (Zimmerli);
- models of conflicting redactions over a longer period of time, combined with a late dating of most parts of the book (Garscha, Pohlmann);

¹⁰ The literature prior to Walther Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., BKAT 13 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1979) has been consulted occasionally but not systematically as their redaction-critical proposals are deemed out-dated on the whole, although individual observations remain of course valuable. For literature on Ezekiel published before 1969, consult the bibliography in Zimmerli, or Bernhard Lang, *Ezechiel: Der Prophet und das Buch*, EdF 153 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1981); Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "Ezekiel among the Critics," *CurBS* 2 (1994): 9-24. On more recent literature, see also the published bibliographical works: Risa Levitt Kohn, "Ezekiel At the Turn of the Century," *CurBR* 2, no. 1 (2003): 9-31; Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, "Forschung am Ezechielbuch 1969-2004 (I-III)," *TRu* 71 (2006): 60-90, 164-191, 265-309; Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Ezechiel: Der Stand der theologischen Diskussion* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008); Alan J. Hauser and Schuyler Kaufman, *Recent Research on the Major Prophets*, RRBS (Sheffield: Phoenix, 2008).

¹¹ For better comparability, references to segments of verses are given throughout according to Richter's syntax-based system, as demonstrated in Appendix A-E (for details, see 1.4.2.1 below).

¹² Gustav Hölscher, *Hesekiel, der Dichter und das Buch: Eine literarkritische Untersuchung*, BZAW 39 (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1924).

- a “holistic” or synchronic model which focuses on the literary unity of the present book as an intelligible entirety, mainly disregarding redaction-critical issues (Greenberg).¹³

1.2.1.1 The “Ezekiel School” (*Fortschreibungsmodell*)

The most influential scholar on Ezekiel in the twentieth century was the Swiss professor WALTHER ZIMMERLI (1907-1983), whose monumental two-volume commentary (published 1955-69, second edition in 1979, English translation in 1979/83)¹⁴ is, after more than forty years, still unmatched in both comprehensiveness and quality. In addition, Zimmerli published numerous essays on Ezekiel as well as on other prophets and on biblical theology.¹⁵ With regard to the redaction history of the book of Ezekiel, he suggested a process of gradual expansion: after an initial oral phase and small units of Ezekielian writings, this authentic core of texts was first redacted by the prophet personally. Subsequently, a circle of “disciples” – what Zimmerli called the *Ezekiel school* – added more and more material to this “first edition” and rearranged existing material, until the book arrived at its final shape. In this view, the redaction process is essentially one of continuity. The different stages of redaction are not always clearly distinguishable as the Ezekiel school imitated the style and theology of their teacher. The expansion process is thought to be essentially completed during the exile.

¹³ Because of the importance of redaction criticism in the present thesis, literature following the third approach is not normally included in this review.

¹⁴ Walther Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 2 vols., BKAT 13 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969); English translation: Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel: Chapters 1-24*, trans. Ronald E. Clements, vol. 1, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979); *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel: Chapters 25-48*, trans. James D. Martin, vol. 2, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

¹⁵ His most significant essays have been re-published in English in two collections: *I Am Yahweh*, ed. Walter Brueggemann, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982); *The Fiery Throne: The Prophets and Old Testament Theology*, ed. K. C. Hanson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003). Similar collections in German are: Walther Zimmerli, *Gottes Offenbarung: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Alten Testament*, TB 19 (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1963); *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, TB 51 (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1974).

Zimmerli dedicates some space in his introduction to the visions, in the context of the key literary forms employed in the book of Ezekiel. His emphasis at this point is, therefore, on the phrases and formal characteristics shared in particular by the three longest vision accounts (1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48), which feature an appearance of the Glory of YHWH. In terms of redaction criticism, Zimmerli sees especially the formulaic back-references among these three visions in the context of a late book-redactional stage.¹⁶

Though obviously criticized and corrected in details, Zimmerli's ideas are still fundamental guidelines for most scholars who work with a diachronic approach. In effect, nearly every subsequent publication is, to some extent, influenced by Zimmerli.

1.2.1.2 Conflicting Redactions

A minority of scholars, especially in German scholarship, sees redaction as the product of discontinuity and opposition instead of, as with Zimmerli, an expression of continuity. This approach asserts an extensive amount of redactional material and layers, combined with an assumed late composition of the book of Ezekiel. The prophetic figure who gave origin to the book disappears behind the layers of redaction. Among the authors presented in this survey, the redaction-critical models by JÖRG GARSCHA (1974) and KARL-FRIEDRICH POHLMANN (1996/2001) belong in this category.¹⁷

¹⁶ “Von einer vom Propheten selber stilisierten Visionenreihe wird man besser nicht reden (vRabenau). Die Formeln des Rückverweises auf die ausgeführte Beschreibung der erscheinenden Herrlichkeit Jahwes (3:23; 8:4; 10:15.20.22; 43:3) unterliegen dem starken Verdacht der Entstehung im Zuge der Endredaktion des Buches.“ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 42*. (The English translation, p. 28, mistakenly writes “43:5” instead of “43:3”).

¹⁷ Jörg Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch: Eine redaktionskritische Untersuchung von 1-39*, EHS 23/23 (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 1974); Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel (Ezechiel): Kapitel 1-19*, ATD 22/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); the second volume, with a contribution by Pohlmann's student Thilo Rudnig, was published in 2001.

Garscha's study on Ezek 1-39 engages in a detailed redaction-critical discussion. In fundamental disagreement with the, at his time, consensus on the *School* hypothesis and the attribution of large parts of the book to the exilic prophet, Garscha holds the view that it is not the secondary character of any portion of text that needs to be proven but, on the contrary, its authenticity.¹⁸ As a result, he attributes only two passages (17:1-10* and 23:1-25*) to the sixth-century prophet. Altogether, Garscha assumes numerous redactions, dating the first edition of the book ("VEz") to the early fifth century, with a second stratum ("DEz") in the first half of the fourth century and further redactions as recent as 300 and later.¹⁹ His position has not found many followers.

Also Pohlmann sees Ezek 1-39 essentially as the product of a later time, with very little text dating back to the sixth century. Yet in their details the two authors differ greatly. Pohlmann discerns early material (mostly laments), three main redactions, and some proto-apocalyptic expansions. Each redaction stands in opposition to the previous. Pohlmann dates them: 1. during the exile (post-587 in Palestine; the *older prophetic book*); 2. the end of the fifth century (the *golah-oriented* redaction); 3. the fourth century (the *diaspora-oriented* redactions). Thus the book itself becomes completely detached from the prophet after whom it is named, and from the historical setting it adopts.²⁰ This model has been applied by Thilo Rudnig to Ezek 40-48.²¹

¹⁸ Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 14-16.

¹⁹ See his summary on pp. 283-311.

²⁰ For an outline of this theory, see Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19, 27-39*. His terminology is: "älteres Prophetenbuch, golaorientierte Redaktion, diasporaorientierte Redaktion / diasporatheologische Bearbeitungen."

²¹ Thilo Alexander Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan: Redaktionskritische Studien zu Ez 40-48*, BZAW 287 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000); Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann and Thilo Alexander Rudnig, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel (Ezechiel): Kapitel 20-48*, ATD 22/2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001). See section 1.2.5 for more details.

1.2.1.3 Holistic Interpretation

Alongside these diachronic approaches, an increasing number of authors, especially in North American scholarship, do not apply redaction criticism but prefer to work on the present text level. As regards the book of Ezekiel, MOSHE GREENBERG is the most prominent representative of this type of exegesis. He wrote two volumes of a commentary on Ezekiel and a number of essays, and outlined and defended his methodology in a systematic manner.²² Greenberg gives value to the canonical text as an intentional literary product. He thus specializes in carefully observing its structure, patterns, and themes, drawing on rabbinic interpretation more than on modern-Western Ezekiel scholarship.

From the 1990's onwards, a number of commentaries and monographs with a synchronic approach have been published on Ezekiel.²³ Greenberg's influence on

²² Moshe Greenberg, "The Vision of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8-11: A Holistic Interpretation," in *The Divine Helmsman: Studies on God's Control of Human Events, Presented to Lou H. Silberman*, ed. J. L. Crenshaw and S. Sandmel (New York: Ktav, 1980), 143-164; *Ezekiel 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22/1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983); "Ezekiel's Vision: Literary and Iconographic Aspects," in *History, Historiography and Interpretation: Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literatures*, ed. Hayim Tadmor and Moshe Weinfeld (Leiden: Brill, 1983; reprint, 1984), 159-168; "The Design and Themes of Ezekiel's Program of Restoration," *Int* 38 (1984): 181-208; "What Are Valid Criteria for Determining Inauthentic Matter in Ezekiel?," in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 123-135; *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22/2 (New York: Doubleday, 1997).

²³ For example: Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel*, VTSup 56 (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 2 vols., NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997/1998); Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 76 (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000); Jacqueline E. Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live? The Problem of the Moral Self in the Book of Ezekiel*, BZAW 301 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000); Andrew Mein, *Ezekiel and the Ethics of Exile*, OTM (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "The Book of Ezekiel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in *NIB* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 1073-1607; Ka Leung Wong, *The Idea of Retribution in the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 87 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Margaret S. Odell, *Ezekiel*, SHBC (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2005); Horace D. Hummel, *Ezekiel*, 2 vols., ConC (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2005/2007); James Robson, *Word and Spirit in Ezekiel*, LHB/OTS 447 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006); Stephen L. Cook, "Ezekiel," in *ThBC*, ed. Gail R. O'Day and David L. Petersen (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 241-256; Tuell, *Ezekiel*; Kathleen M. Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry in Jeremiah and Ezekiel*, CBET 65 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012). On this tendency, especially in North American literature, see also Franz D. Hubmann, "Ezechiel 37,1-14 in der neueren Forschung," in *Auf den Spuren der schriftgelehrten Weisen: Festschrift für Johannes Marböck anlässlich seiner Emeritierung*, ed. Irmtraud Fischer, Ursula Rapp, and Johannes Schiller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 117-119, 125. Moreover, several publications at the turn of the century look at the issue of divine presence and absence, and the role of the temple in it. In general, these studies share a synchronic view on Ezekiel; they often address the influence of extra-biblical, especially Mesopotamian, literature and

these is clearly perceptible. Since the focus of the present thesis is mainly on redaction history, the bulk of this literature is only relevant to a limited extent and is not included in this review.

We shall now evaluate literature on each of the four major vision accounts, beginning with Ezek 1:1-3:15. The focus is on redaction-critical viewpoints.

1.2.2 Literature on Ezekiel 1:1-3:15

The introductory vision in the book of Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1-3:15) has traditionally been treated in studies on prophetic call narratives.²⁴ From this perspective, the focus is inevitably on the elements shared with other prophetic call narratives, not on redaction-critical issues or on the specific problems of Ezek 1:1-3:15. The redaction history of Ezek 1:1-3:15 has been addressed mainly in commentaries or essays.²⁵

ZIMMERLI²⁶ seeks, in the first place, “a decision on the basic question of whether the connection of the vision of the throne-chariot with that of the scroll is original or solely the product of a subsequent redactional bringing together of two quite different parts.”²⁷ He does so by means of a form-critical and tradition-historical examination of prophetic call narratives (especially Jer 1:4-10 and Isa 6) in comparison to Ezek 1:1-3:15. Zimmerli concludes that an original connection of

the way these influences are used and adapted in Ezekiel for particular theological purposes. Publications of this kind are: Daniel Bodi, *The Book of Ezekiel and the Poem of Erra*, OBO 104 (Fribourg: Universitätsverlag, 1991); John F. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel*, BJSUC 7 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000) along with three essays by Daniel I. Block, John T. Strong, and Steven S. Tuell in an SBL conference collection: Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), respectively pp. 15-42; 69-95; and 97-116. With a similar focus on Mesopotamian (and Pre-Socratic Greek) literature in comparison to Ezekiel: Dale F. Launderville, *Spirit and Reason: The Embodied Character of Ezekiel's Symbolic Thinking* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007).

²⁴ For instance in the well-known essays Norman C. Habel, “Form and Significance of the Call Narratives,” *ZAW* 77 (1965): 297-323; Burke O. Long, “Prophetic Call Traditions and Reports of Visions,” *ZAW* 84 (1972): 494-500.

²⁵ We cannot consider here the many treatises dealing only with particular topics (such as the date in Ezek 1:1).

²⁶ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1-85.

²⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 97. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 16.

vision and commission in Ezekiel's call narrative "must be regarded as entirely possible."²⁸ All the more as there is no precedence for a vision without interpretation: Ezek 1 alone is formally incomplete. The subsequent redaction-critical analysis of Ezek 1:1-3:15 reinforces Zimmerli's conviction that Ezek 1 and Ezek 2-3 have always formed an authentic and inseparable unity. That this unity did undergo redaction in other instances is nevertheless evident for Zimmerli. His investigation is aimed at reconstructing the original text; he identifies a variety of glosses and additions, but not systematic redactions. He firstly identifies 1:3a as the redactional book title. Within 1:5-12, he applies the irregular use of masculine suffixes for the feminine "living beings" as a criterion for redaction, leaving only vv. 5, 6b, 11cd, 12ad for the original description. The section on the wheels, 1:15-21, is entirely redactional (with v. 21 being an even later addition) and dependent on vv. 5-12*.²⁹ On the other hand, Zimmerli regards most of 1:22a, 26-28 as original and defends the unity of 2:1-3:15, excluding only 3:13 as secondary.³⁰ For Zimmerli, the first author of Ezek 1:1-3:15 is the exilic prophet Ezekiel, whose genuine experience of the described vision is not questioned. Redaction is seen as a process of consecutive expansions by the *Ezekiel school*, mainly exilic, though its last additions reach the period of the LXX.³¹

Published contemporaneously to the completion of Zimmerli's commentary, the commentary by JOHN W. WEVERS³² is nevertheless noticeably influenced by Zimmerli. Wevers's identification of authentic material within Ezek 1:1-3:15 is similar but not identical to Zimmerli: also Wevers applies the criterion of gender-congruent suffixes to 1:4-28, yet different from Zimmerli he considers part of the

²⁸ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 100. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 21.

²⁹ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 27-29.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 29-33.

³¹ *ibid.*, 37, 59.

³² John W. Wevers, *Ezekiel*, NCB (London: Nelson, 1969).

wheels paragraph to be original. For Wevers, the original text includes 1:1, 3b*, 4*-6, 9a*, 11*, 13*, 15-16*, 18*-19, 21b-22, 26-28; 2:1-8a, 9-10; 3:1-12, 14-15.³³

GARSCHA separates the bulk of Ezek 1 from the subsequent dialogue. He distinguishes two main layers in Ezek 1:1-3:15: the original beginning of the book (“VEz”) in 1:1a, 3a [without location]; 2:4-10; 3:2, 4-9, and the “Deutero-Ezekielian Redaction (DEz)” in 1:1b-d, the remainder of 1:3, 1:4-2:2* and 3:10-12, 14-16a. Also the short vision in 3:22-24 is attributed to “DEz.” Garscha does himself investigate further additions in 1:4-28 but reiterates Zimmerli’s opinion on the matter.³⁴

ANTHONY D. YORK’s article on Ezek 1³⁵ argues that this chapter is the result of a merging process. He contends that this vision originally belonged to the “restoration prophecy” in Ezek 43, which occurred in the thirtieth year (1:1), and that Ezekiel received a similar vision at the time of his call in the fifth year (1:2). Because of its importance, the restoration prophecy once occupied the position at the very beginning of the book, followed by the vision and narrative on Ezekiel’s call. A later redaction arranged the book in chronological order and moved the “restoration prophecy” toward the end of the book, yet the associated vision remained in place. As a result, the two similar visions were eventually merged into one account: the present 1:4-28.

The book by ERNST VOGT³⁶ on a number of passages in Ezekiel (namely on Ezek 1-3; 8-11; 18; 20:25f; 33; 40-48) ventures several new hypotheses on redaction-critical issues, as well as on some aspects of the iconography of the visions and on the mysterious motif of Ezekiel’s inability to speak and to leave his house. This is one of the few studies concerned with at least three of the major vision accounts in

³³ *ibid.*, 41-55. See also the list of what Wevers defines as “words of the prophet” on pp. 37f.

³⁴ On chaps 1-3, see Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 239-252.

³⁵ Anthony D. York, “Ezekiel I: Inaugural and Restoration Visions?,” *VT* 27 (1977): 82-98.

³⁶ Ernst Vogt, *Untersuchungen zum Buch Ezechiel*, AnBib 95 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981).

Ezekiel. Regarding 1:1-3:15, Vogt defends the genuine unity between Chapters 1* and 2-3.³⁷ He reduces the vision in Ezek 1 to a basic account consisting of 1:3a, 1, 3b, 4-5, 11cd, 13acd, 22a, 26-28,³⁸ followed by 2:1-3:12a, 14b-15. The authenticity of the theophanic experience and its exilic setting are for Vogt unquestionable.

Embracing an entirely different method of determining whether or not the inaugural narrative in Ezekiel forms a literary unity, CORNELIUS B. HOUK offers a statistical linguistic study of the body of the account, Ezek 1:4-3:11.³⁹ He employs two statistical methods: the test of average word lengths by syllables and the chi square median test. Both aim at unconscious choices of the author and are therefore seen as significant for recognizing where different authors were at work. Houk arrives at the conclusion that 1:4-28 and 2:1-3:11 are not a literary unity and that 1:15-21 is from a third source. He then turns to evaluating the redaction-critical hypotheses of other scholars.⁴⁰

In a very concise essay, BERNHARD LANG⁴¹ gives some fresh consideration to Ezek 1:1-3:15. He, too, sketches a redaction history of two originally independent narratives. According to Lang, the *Visionsbericht* (vision report) encompasses 1:1, 3b, 4-28; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14; dating to the thirtieth year, it is the most recent vision in the book. Verses 1:2; 3:13 are glosses. On the other hand, Lang finds the oldest account, the *Berufungsbericht* (commission report), in 1:3a; 2:3-3:11, 15* (or perhaps only 1:3a; 2:8-3:3, 10-11, 15*⁴²). The two were merged by an editor to conform the call narrative to the other vision accounts.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 20-26.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 9.

³⁹ Cornelius B. Houk, "A Statistical Linguistic Study of Ezekiel 1:4-3:11," *ZAW* 93 (1981): 76-85.

⁴⁰ Houk disagrees on various accounts with Fohrer, Zimmerli, Garscha, Hölscher and Hertrich, but he essentially confirms two older studies by Sprank (1926) and Matthews (1939).

⁴¹ Bernhard Lang, "Die erste und die letzte Vision des Propheten: Eine Überlegung zu Ezechiel 1-3," *Bib* 64 (1983): 225-230.

⁴² See his summary: *ibid.*, 228-230.

By contrast, GREENBERG's Ezekiel commentary⁴³ is devoted to his method of "holistic" interpretation, and Greenberg does not engage in redaction-critical analysis. On a textual critical level, he concedes in several cases that the MT in Ezek 1 is not identical with the original text. In two places, 1:1-3 and 3:12-13, 15, Greenberg admits the probability of redaction, although "supposing the prophet to have been his own editor and the author of the explanation in vss. [1:]2-3."⁴⁴

The commentary by HANS FERDINAND FUHS,⁴⁵ on the other hand, assumes the redaction process in terms of Zimmerli's *Fortschreibung* theory: the prophet Ezekiel – whom Fuhs situates in Jerusalem until 586 – transmits his message both orally and in writing. The Ezekiel School is then responsible for a multilayered process of actualization, expansion and redaction; an anonymous author ("Verfasser") from this circle eventually compiles, "etwa um 540 v. Chr.," the material into a book. The collection of oracles against foreign nations (chaps 25-32) is only incorporated in the fourth or third century, and the "apocalypse" of Chapters 38-39 even later. Fuhs sees in the three great vision accounts the "literary and theological framework of the book";⁴⁶ their basic narratives (1:4-28*; 8-9*; 37*; 40:1-2; 43:4-7a; 47:1-12) go back to Ezekiel. Although Fuhs supposes an oral origin for parts of 2:1-3:15, he vehemently sees 1:1-3:15 as one single event whose two parts (vision and commission) should not be separated.⁴⁷ He considers, however, the entire description of the living creatures and the wheels as distinct redactional reflections; thus the original Ezekielian share of the narrative is defined as 1:1[?], 3b, 4ab, 5a, 22a, 26-28; 2:1-10; 3:1-12, 14-15.

⁴³ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*; on Ezek 1:1-28b_a see pp. 37-59 and on 1:28b_p-3:15 see pp. 60-81.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 39. On 3:12-13, 15 see pp. 74, 71, respectively.

⁴⁵ Hans Ferdinand Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 2 vols., NEchtB (Würzburg: Echter, 1984/88); for the following overview of the redaction history, see pp. 7-11.

⁴⁶ "Literarisches und theologisches Gerüst des Buches ..." *ibid.*, 7. (The above translation is mine.)

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 19. Generally on 1:1-3:15, see pp. 19-29.

Generally speaking, the literature on Ezek 1-3 from the mid-1980's onward only rarely touches upon issues of redaction criticism but tends to focus on various aspects of the final text.⁴⁸ In commentaries since the late 1980's, a number of authors have taken a stance toward issues of redaction criticism that "endeavours to stand midway between those of Zimmerli and Greenberg." In two cases, namely in the commentaries by RONALD HALS (1989) and LESLIE ALLEN (1990/94),⁴⁹ this is combined with a special emphasis on form criticism.

Owing to the format of the series, Hals' commentary is devoted to a form-critical approach. He agrees with Zimmerli in many instances, for example in assuming that the book reached its final form during the exile, but he remains vague with regard to the redaction process.⁵⁰ His emphasis on structure generally lends itself more to a present-text analysis than to redaction criticism. Hals sees Ezek 1:1-3:15 as one unit and emphasises that its parts "never existed independently."⁵¹ Although he notices and describes the signs of redaction in Ezek 1, Hals prefers not to engage in either detailed textual criticism or redaction criticism (except for

⁴⁸ For instance, Michael Lieb, *The Visionary Mode: Biblical Prophecy, Hermeneutics, and Cultural Change* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991) includes, in his discussion of Ezek 1, a pointed criticism of the hypothetical character of redaction criticism. Coming from experiential and psychological-mystical considerations, Lieb traces the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the chariot vision in Ezek 1 throughout Jewish and Christian mysticism and spirituality from apocalypticism to Dante's *Divina Commedia*.

Essays on Ezek 1:1-3:15 that do not enter into the subject of redaction criticism include: Robert R. Wilson, "Prophecy in Crisis: The Call of Ezekiel," *Int* 38 (1984): 117-130; Daniel I. Block, "Text and Emotion: A Study in the 'Corruptions' in Ezekiel's Inaugural Vision (Ezekiel 1:4-28)," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 418-442; Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Concentric Structure of Ezekiel 2:1-3:15," in *Proceedings of the 10th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division A* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 107-114; Leslie C. Allen, "The Structure and Intention of Ezekiel I," *VT* 43 (1993): 145-161; Margaret S. Odell, "You Are What You Eat: Ezekiel and the Scroll," *JBL* 117 (1998): 229-248; Margaret S. Odell, "Ezekiel Saw What He Said He Saw: Genres, Forms, and the Vision of Ezekiel 1," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 162-176.

⁴⁹ Ronald M. Hals, *Ezekiel*, FOTL 19 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, WBC 29 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990); *Ezekiel 1-19*, WBC 28 (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1994). Citation: Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, xxiii. Among the recent commentaries, also FRANZ SEDLMEIER and PAUL JOYCE move along the fine line of acknowledging the diachronic growth of the text whilst at the same time emphasising the interpretation of the final form: Franz Sedlmeier, *Das Buch Ezechiel: Kapitel 1-24*, NSKAT 21/1 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2002) and Joyce, *Ezekiel*.

⁵⁰ Hals, *Ezekiel*, 5f.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 9.

excluding 1:3a).⁵² For 2:1-3:15, no redaction-critically significant observations are made. Because of its negative outlook on Ezekiel's achievements, Hals assumes the call vision was written quite early, i.e. before or around 587, in order to corroborate the prophet's authority.⁵³

Allen imagines the genesis of the book of Ezekiel in a way similar to Zimmerli, perhaps somewhat more simplified: he too assumes that Ezekiel was active throughout the first generation of exiles (both the 598/97 group and, later, the second wave of deportees) and that the prophet redacted his own writings. For Allen, the final redaction of the book took place during the exile, only about a generation after the prophet's death.⁵⁴ Like Zimmerli, Allen treats Ezek 1:1-3:15 as one text unit. In spite of citing the most significant scholarly positions on redaction criticism, Allen is disinclined to regard any part of 1:1-3:15 as secondary, except for 1:2-3a.⁵⁵ Allen sees in Ezek 1 a combination of storm-theophanic and throne-theophanic elements⁵⁶ and in the unit as a whole, besides being a call narrative, the literary introduction to the judgement announced in the following chapters.

Later in the same decade, the first volume of the commentary by Karl-FRIEDRICH POHLMANN was published.⁵⁷ In line with his particular redaction model, Pohlmann assigns the oldest parts of Ezek 1:1-3:15 (i.e. 1:1-3*; 2:9-10; 3:1*, 2-3, 10a, 11*, 14b, 15) to the *golah-oriented* redaction. He assumes this narrative was written to create an adequate introduction to the fifth-century version of the book.⁵⁸ Later additions, comprising 2:3-7; 3:4-7 and 3:22-27, are attributed to the diaspora-

⁵² "Rather than attempt to reconstruct a hypothetical, logically and grammatically consistent original on the basis of these complexities, it seems better simply to affirm a complex textual and literary history, doubtless resulting in part from the complexities of the content." Ibid., 15.

⁵³ *ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁴ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, xxiv-xxvi. On Ezek 1:1-3:15, see pp. 1-45.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, 17-19.

⁵⁶ Published one year prior in: Allen, "Structure and Intention," 145-161.

⁵⁷ Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*. On Ezek 1:1-3:15, see pp. 43-68. The second volume, with a contribution by one of Pohlmann's students, was published five years later. See also Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Ezechielstudien*, BZAW 202 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1992).

⁵⁸ Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 29.

oriented redaction, enlarging the audience to Israel in its entirety. Finally, the vision of the throne-chariot (1:4-2:2*) and the wheels (1:15-21) are late expansions associated with apocalypticism.

In the footsteps of the iconographic approach of Othmar Keel, CHRISTOPH UEHLINGER and SUSANNE MÜLLER-TRUFAUT,⁵⁹ attempt a diachronic exegesis of Ezek 1, which combines iconography and redaction criticism. Particular reference is made to Babylonian astral symbolism, which the authors contend to be related to the wheels in the vision. The study also discusses the relationship of Ezek 1 and Ezek 10 as reciprocally influential. A table⁶⁰ summarizes the suggested redaction history for both Ezek 1 and 10, which is presented as a complex multi-layered process developed over a long period of time. Assuming a Mesopotamian background for Ezek 1 and an Egypto-Palestinian background for Ezek 10, the authors attempt to both explain and date each layer with the help of iconographic material (their “tentative benchmarks” arrive as late as the second century). However, the bulk of the vision in Ezek 1, i.e. the four living beings, the firmament, the throne and the humanlike figure, is dated to the sixth century. Uehlinger and Müller-Trufaut envision the following elements as successive additions: the fiery glance in v. 13a, the wheels (vv. 15-17, 19), the eyes on the wheels (v. 18), the four faces of the living beings (v. 10), and the one spirit guiding the entire system (vv. 20-21).

The focus of ACHIM BEHRENS’s study,⁶¹ to which I will return later in this chapter, is the establishing of genre typical features of prophetic vision accounts in the Old Testament. Behrens’s analysis of twenty-five of the twenty-six identified

⁵⁹ Christoph Uehlinger and Susanne Müller Trufaut, “Ezekiel 1, Babylonian Cosmological Scholarship and Iconography: Attempts at Further Refinement,” *TZ* 57 (2001): 140-171. See Keel’s response in: “Die Herrlichkeitserscheinung des Königsgottes in der Prophetie,” in *Mythisches in biblischer Bildsprache: Gestalt und Verwandlung in Prophetie und Psalmen*, ed. H. Irsigler, QD 209 (Freiburg: Herder, 2004), 145-149.

⁶⁰ Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, “Ezekiel 1,” 151f.

⁶¹ Achim Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen im Alten Testament: Sprachliche Eigenarten, Funktion und Geschichte einer Gattung*, AOAT 292 (Münster: Ugarit, 2002). On Ezek 1:1-3:15 see pp. 183-209.

prophetic vision accounts concerns the structure and the individual manifestation of the genre features as well as, almost as a by-product, redaction-critical considerations and a sketch of the text's rhetorical function. In the case of Ezek 1:1-3:15, Behrens distinguishes two vision accounts: the vision of Glory (1:4-2:8) and the vision of the scroll (2:9-3:9), bound together by a frame made of title (1:1-3) and conclusion (3:10-15). Behrens observes great discrepancies in language, style, length, and content between the two visionary parts of the accounts. In particular he perceives a close relationship of the scroll vision to Jer 1 and to older prophetic vision reports insofar as the object of the vision is an item of daily life (a hand holding a scroll). The scroll vision is therefore, for Behrens, the older text and genuine call narrative, which perhaps was the original beginning of a first collection of Ezekiel's words. The visionary quasi-description of the Glory of YHWH, on the other hand, is meant to increase the legitimation of the entire book at a later point in time. Only the vision of the Glory is in its vocabulary significantly related to the Priestly writings in the Pentateuch. For Behrens, the two visions are too heterogeneous to derive from the same author. Since – according to the rules of the genre – a mere sight without message cannot subsist alone, Behrens proposes an original connection of the speech 2:1-8 to 1:4-28. He sees in 2:1-8 essentially a formulaic compilation from elements of 3:1-9. In its final form, 1:1-3:15 appears through the framing *inclusio* as one unit. Behrens believes that the final text, situated at the threshold between traditional prophecy and apocalypticism, was completed during the exilic period.

1.2.3 Literature on Ezekiel 8-11

In view of the newer literature on the first temple vision, Ezek 8-11, it has aptly been said that

one may get the impression that these chapters may be held up as a prime example of how redaction-critical explanation models reach their limits. Almost every possible

theory, and its respective opposite, is, or was, proposed pertaining to the genesis of the great rapture-vision.⁶²

Indeed, this literature survey reflects the disparateness of opinions in recent Ezekiel scholarship, which is especially visible with regard to Ezek 8-11. For the general redaction-critical assumptions of commentaries and studies that have been presented already, refer to the previous section.

On the topic of redaction in Ezek 8-11, ZIMMERLI⁶³ firstly recognizes 11:1-21 as a “foreign element.”⁶⁴ This section is subdivided into two originally independent words: 11:1-13, 14-21, each with its own redaction history, yet inserted together with the purpose of giving a counterbalance to the preceding vision account. For the remainder of Ezek 8-11, Zimmerli uses the following observations as guidelines for redaction criticism: the changing location and description of the Glory of YHWH; the parallels between Ezek 1 and Ezek 10; the explicit assertions of the identity of the two visions; the variation between כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה and כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; and the variation, in the MT, between *cherub* in the singular and *cherubim* (plural). He arrives at a primary text of the first temple vision that includes 8:1-2ab, 3, 5-7a, 9-18c; 9:1-2, 3c-6, 8-11; 10:2*, 4, 7*, 18a, 19d; 11:23-25.⁶⁵ The secondary pieces of text are categorized (for example, 11:1-13, 14-21 is discussed separately from the identification of Chapters 1 and 10) but their chronology is not established.

The position of WEVERS⁶⁶ is again very close to that of Zimmerli. Wevers subdivides Ezek 8-11 into ten thematic sections, six of which he deems to be, in the main, original: 8:1-4, 5-18; 9:1-11; 10:1-7, 18-19; 11:23. Within these verses, further glosses and redactional additions are identified, which are essentially the same as in

⁶² *ibid.*, 210. “... kann man den Eindruck gewinnen, diese Kapitel könnten als Paradebeispiel dafür gelten, wie literarkritische Erklärungsmodelle an ihre Grenzen geraten. Beinahe alles und das jeweilige Gegenteil wurde und wird hinsichtlich der großen Entrückungsvision vertreten...” (The above translation is mine.)

⁶³ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 187-253.

⁶⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 231. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 202.

⁶⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 202-206.

⁶⁶ Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 77-98.

Zimmerli. The sections 10:8-17, 20-22 are seen as “a series of expansions based on chapter 1.”⁶⁷ For 11:1-13, it “is not argued that this is not a genuine product of Ezekiel, but rather that it is not part of the chapters 8–11 vision”⁶⁸; however, the authenticity is then restricted to 11:1-7d, 8, 13. Analogously, Wevers seems to regard 11:14-16, 19-20 and the oracle formula in v. 21 as genuinely Ezekielian but secondary to its present context.⁶⁹

Quite surprisingly, also GARSCHA⁷⁰ draws almost entirely on Zimmerli in determining the original account of Ezek 8-11. However, he holds an opposing view on two significant points: Firstly, according to Garscha the oldest account of the first temple vision dates back not to Ezekiel but to the “Deutero-Ezekielian redactor,” postulated in the fourth century. Secondly, Garscha attributes 11:1-5*, 6-10, 13-20 to the original narrative, even though he recognizes the tensions between these two oracles and their visionary context.⁷¹ This oldest material comprises 8:1-2b, 3, 5-7a, 9-12c, 13-18c; 9:1-2, 3c-6, 8-11; 10:2*, 4, 7*, 18a, 19d; 11:1-5*, 6-10, 13-20, 23-25. Redactions within these chapters are not further classified. Garscha specifies that, given the close connection of Ezek 8-11 to Ezek 40-48, a conclusive analysis of the first temple vision would be possible only in connection with a detailed study of Ezek 40-48.

VOGT⁷² analyses the temple vision Ezek 8-11 chapter by chapter, yet he begins with the discussion of its all-encompassing frame in 8:1-3; 11:24-25. In Vogt’s opinion, 8:2-3ab – and not only 8:2cd as for Zimmerli – is a secondary addition that occurred in two stages, with the description of the “man” in v. 2cd being the more

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 88f., 91. Additionally, the distinction of *cherub* and *cherubim* in Ezek 10 is used as an example of the criterion “consistency of language” for determining authentic material (p. 32).

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 92.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 78, 95f. However, 11:16-18, 19-21 are not listed in Wevers’s “Words of the Prophet” on pp. 37f.

⁷⁰ Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 252-262.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, 260-262.

⁷² Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 38-62.

recent.⁷³ Whilst Vogt agrees with Zimmerli for the remainder of Ezek 8, he advances a new theory concerning the juxtaposition, in Ezek 9, between total judgement (for example in 9:5) and the saving of the innocent (for example in 9:6). Vogt explains this with a mitigating redactional effort that inserted vv. 2e, 3c-4, 6bc, 11 and the direction “after him” in v. 5b, whereas the original account (in 9:1ab, 2*, 5-6*, 8-10) had the killing of the entire population.⁷⁴ For Ezek 10-11, Vogt considers only 10:2*, 7*, 4* [in this order!], 18a*, 19d; 11:23-25 as belonging to the original narrative. Exilic leaders expanded this account through the four cherubim, the wheelwork (*galgal*), and the platform (i.e. 10:1, 3a, 18b, 19*; 11:22 and “between the cherubim” in 10:2d, 7a), thus creating the image of a throne-chariot in analogy to Ezek 1.⁷⁵ A second (undated) redaction assumedly introduced the single cherub in 10:2, 4, 7 as well as vv. 3b, 6.⁷⁶ Vogt discusses the description of the cherubim and the wheels in 10:8-22 in conjunction with the parallel verses in Ezek 1. He believes both chapters draw on a common source, each having “its own history and its own development.”⁷⁷

The analysis of Ezek 8-11 in FUHS⁷⁸ is mostly influenced by Houk⁷⁹ and Zimmerli (contra Vogt). Fuhs attributes Ezek 8-9, minus some small glosses (8:2, 4, 7b-8), to the prophet himself. He supports, if tentatively, Houk’s idea of an “altar

⁷³ *ibid.*, 39-41.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, 46-48.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 54-59.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, 59-62.

⁷⁷ “Darum scheint, dass weder die Beschreibungen von Kap. 1 von denen in Kap. 10, noch umgekehrt die von Kap. 10 von denen in Kap. 1 abhängig sein können, sondern dass beide von einer gemeinsamen Quelle herzuleiten sind und dass jede von ihnen ihre eigene Geschichte und ihre eigene Entwicklung gehabt hat“; *ibid.*, 64.

⁷⁸ Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 47-64.

⁷⁹ Cornelius B. Houk, “The Final Redaction of Ezekiel 10,” *JBL* 90 (1971): 42-54. By comparing Ezek 10 to Ezek 1, Houk arrives at the conclusion that most of Ezek 10 is “a unified, purposeful effort to make use of the vision in ch. 1” (p. 46). Houk presupposes an “altar vision,” namely 10:2-3, 4bc, 6-7, as the only authentic material and not influenced by chap. 1. However, he proposes that its original position was between 9:2 and 9:3; the original vision (8; 9:1-2; 10:2-3, 4bc, 6-7; 9:3b-7, 11) describing the desecration and subsequent purification of the temple through the burning coals. According to Houk, it was a later editor who added 9:8-10, postponed the “altar vision” to its present place, and expanded it through material from Ezek 1. As a consequence, the Glory of YHWH appears as an entirely redactional feature.

vision” consisting of 9:1-2; 10:2-3, 4bc, 6-7⁸⁰ and narrating the city’s cleansing rather than its destruction by fire. Differently from Houk, 9:8-10 are regarded as authentic; but the description of the Glory of YHWH and its leaving the city (10:1, 4a, 5, 8-22 along with 11:22-23) are, for Fuhs, a well-contemplated redactional addition by the late-exilic *Verfasser* who composed Ezek 8-11 out of Ezek 8-9* and other pre-existing material, such as 11:1-8, 13 and 11:15-16, 19-20. Contrary to Zimmerli, Fuhs argues that 11:14-21 was genuinely compiled for its visionary context, as he attributes the secondary vv. 14, 17-18, 21 directly to the *Verfasser*. Fuhs holds that the composition of Chapters 8-11 was essentially completed around 540 .

During the 1980’s, an interesting discussion arises, using Ezek 8-11 as a case in point in the dispute about diachronic versus synchronic methods. Greenberg expressed his ideas about holistic interpretation on various occasions, choosing at least once, in 1980, the example of Ezek 8-11.⁸¹ He restated his argument in a contribution to the 35th *Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense* in Belgium in 1985.⁸² The conference also featured a paper by Joachim Becker on “Ezek 8-11 as a unified composition within a pseudepigraphic book of Ezekiel.”⁸³ Greenberg and Becker mark the two extreme positions of synchronic exegesis: the former attributing the entire book to the exilic prophet; the latter supposing the entire book to be a post-exilic pseudepigraph.

⁸⁰ Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 57. (He counts 10:5 first with the altar vision and then again with the redactional elaboration on the cherubim. The former seems to be an inadvertent mistake.) It is not entirely clear whether Fuhs supposes the “altar vision” to be written by Ezekiel.

⁸¹ Greenberg, “Vision of Jerusalem,” 143-164; see also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 164-206.

⁸² Greenberg, “Valid Criteria.” The conference proceedings were published in 1986, edited by Johan Lust.

⁸³ Joachim Becker, “Ez 8-11 als einheitliche Komposition in einem pseudepigraphischen Ezechielbuch,” in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 136-150. The quotation is my translation of the paper’s title.

In the same conference volume, yet contrary to both, the essay by FRANK-LOTHAR HOSSFELD argues in favour of a diachronic approach, embracing Zimmerli's expansion hypothesis as the most (or only) adequate way of dealing with the first temple vision.⁸⁴ The contrast, in particular between Hossfeld and Greenberg, is demarcated even more sharply a year later in Hossfeld's article "Problems of a holistic reading of scripture: the example of Ezek 9-10"⁸⁵ where he opposes Greenberg's analysis of those chapters and endeavours to demonstrate the shortcomings of holistic interpretation.⁸⁶ Hossfeld attempts to prove from formal, stylistic and content-based indications that both 11:1-13 and 11:14-21 are originally independent text units and not written by Ezekiel.⁸⁷ Pertaining to the remainder of

⁸⁴ Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, "Die Tempelvision Ez 8-11 im Licht unterschiedlicher methodischer Zugänge," in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 151-165. Hossfeld states on p. 152, "daß das Modell der 'Fortschreibung' allein dem Befund dieser anerkannt komplexen Vision angemessen ist."

⁸⁵ Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, "Probleme einer ganzheitlichen Lektüre der Schrift - dargestellt am Beispiel Ez 9-10," *TQ* 167, no. 4 (1987): 266-277. The quotation is my translation of the title.

⁸⁶ Despite Hossfeld's efforts, literature working with a synchronic approach keeps thriving also with regard to Ezek 8-11 – and this in particular where authors examine theological themes and motifs that this vision entails. This is the case, for example, in Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies*, trans. Frederick H. Cryer, ConBOT 18 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982), 98-102 and in Bodi, *Poem of Erra*. Of course, Bodi does not look exclusively at the first temple vision, yet Ezek 8-11 contain especially many points of contact with the Mesopotamian *Poem of Erra*, e.g. the seven executioners (pp. 95-110) and the absence of a divinity from its temple (pp. 183-218).

Further examples of essays on Ezek 8-11 from a synchronic perspective: Marco Nobile, "Lo sfondo culturale di Ez 8-11," *Anton* 58 (1983), who sees the four scenes in Ezek 8 as parts of one cultic ceremony and Ezek 8-11 as a theological interpretation of the exile and as the establishing of a cultic commemoration of the temple's destruction; Andreas Ruwe, "Die Veränderung tempeltheologischer Konzepte in Ezechiel 8-11," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel - Community without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum*, ed. Beate Ego, et al., WUNT 118 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 3-18. Ruwe particularly examines the implications of 11:16 (temporary divine presence independent from the temple) and of 10:8-17 (the mobile throne-chariot) in regard to the exilic adaptation of theological concepts of the presence of God—away from the traditionally strong connection with Jerusalem and the temple, towards a more dynamic understanding. Similarly Paul M. Joyce, "Dislocation and Adaptation in the Exilic Age and After," in *After the Exile: Essays in Honour of Rex Mason*, ed. John Barton and David J. Reimer (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996), 45-58. More recently, there is an increasing interest in the cherubim and in the priestly-cultic aspects of the vision: e.g. Stephen L. Cook, "Cosmos, Kabod, and Cherub: Ontological and Epistemological Hierarchy in Ezekiel," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 179-197; Dale Launderville, "Ezekiel's Throne-Chariot Vision: Spiritualizing the Model of Divine Royal Rule," *CBQ* 66 (2004): 361-377; Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Destruction of Jerusalem as Purification in Ezekiel 8-11," in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. Marvin A. Sweeney, FAT 45 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 144-155; William A. Tooman, "Ezekiel's Radical Challenge to Inviolability," *ZAW* 121 (2009): 498-514.

⁸⁷ Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 153-156; and "Probleme," 275.

Ezek 10-11, Hossfeld promotes a synthesis of Zimmerli and Vogt insofar as he agrees with Vogt regarding 8:2-3a and the partial-judgement redaction in Chapter 9 and concurs with Zimmerli for most of the rest.⁸⁸ For Hossfeld, the original material is found in 8:1, 3c-e, 5-7a, 9-16, 18a-c; 9:1-2*, 5-6*, 8-10; 10:2*, 4, 7*, 18a, 19d; 11:23-25*. He assumes several *Fortschreibungen*: the insertion of 11:1-13*; that of 11:14-20*, perhaps together with 9:2-11*; a redaction introducing the mobile “Glory of the God of Israel” (8:2-3b, 4; 9:3ab; 10:1-2*, 3-4*, 18b, 19abe; 11:22ac), a further redaction with special interest in the wheels and the throne-chariot (10:5-6 [7*], 19c; 11:22b), as well as a number of small-scale glosses.

Hossfeld’s redaction-critical eagerness stands in contrast to the timidity of HALS⁸⁹ in this field. Despite his “overall impression” of Ezek 8-11 being “that of a much looser unity than in 1:1-3:15,”⁹⁰ he remains cautious in determining redactional material. Hals dates the main vision account of Ezek 8-11 to the years immediately prior to 587 and presumes some textual loss in the course of redaction but he neither precisely defines the extent of the original account, nor does he expand on a possible redaction history. An exception to this is the case of 11:1-13, 14-21: both disputations are clearly considered as secondary to their context.⁹¹ As an independent unit, Hals dates 11:1-13* to the time before the beginning of the siege, with vv. 9-12 being later additions in the light of the events of 587.⁹² Also within 11:14-21 Hals finds signs of redaction; the promises contained in the oracle suggest a post-587 setting.

The commentary by ALLEN⁹³ sees, in continuity with his predecessors, the two sections 11:1-13, 14-21 as “mutually independent in origin” and secondary to their

⁸⁸ Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 157-164; “Probleme,” 269-274.

⁸⁹ Hals, *Ezekiel*, 46-74.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, 46.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, 69.

⁹² *ibid.*, 66.

⁹³ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 114-169.

present context.⁹⁴ Unlike Hossfeld, however, Allen does not exclude the possibility that their integration was done by Ezekiel – consistent with his general inclination to assign a large percentage of text to the exilic prophet. As for the remainder of Ezek 8-11 (mainly Ezek 10), Allen distinguishes five different types of insertions, four of which, he asserts, “may be credited to the prophet himself, along with the basic narrative at an earlier stage”⁹⁵ while the fifth category is not further dated. Insertions of the first type are located in 8:2; 10:1, 9a-d; of the second type in 10:5, 8, 13. An overlap of the second, third, and fourth type is affirmed in 10:20-22b and of the third and fourth type in 8:4; the fourth category is found in 9:3ab; 10:19e; 11:22c. Allen locates the non-Ezekielian fifth type in 10:9e-12, 16-17, 22c.

Contrary to all scholarly opinion since Zimmerli, POHLMANN claims that the oldest part of Ezek 8-11 is found in 11:2-13*.⁹⁶ Pohlmann attributes this unit to the “older prophetic book,” which he locates in Judah during the exilic period. The prophet in this “older book” was active in Jerusalem. Only the “golah-oriented redaction,” according to Pohlmann, situates Ezekiel in exile; Jerusalemite settings such as in 11:2-13* then need justification. The “golah-oriented” account (including 8:1, 3d* and maybe 8:5-18*) was designed as a vision primarily in order to explain the prophet’s knowledge about the state of affairs in the Judean capital. Also 11:14-17[19?]* is part of this layer, although Pohlmann supposes a strong “diaspora-oriented” influence on this unit. Ezek 9 as a whole is seen as a later addition; Pohlmann argues (against Vogt) for the unity of the chapter, with the exception of glosses in 9:3ab, 7bc. With regard to Ezek 10, he assumes Zimmerli’s view that the oldest verses are 10:2*, 4, 7*, 18a, 19d; however, for Pohlmann these were added by yet another redactor, later than Chapter 9. The descriptive parts of Chapter 10 are among the most recent, proto-apocalyptic insertions to the book.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 131.

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, 135. For a summary of the types of revision, see pp. 135f.

⁹⁶ Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 29, 35, 123-169.

In the first decade of the new century there is, in particular, the per se form-critical contribution by BEHRENS.⁹⁷ With recourse to Zimmerli, and in criticism of Pohlmann, Behrens locates the oldest (pre-587) material of Ezek 8-11 in 8:5-9:11*, but he also sees 11:14-21 in an original and intentional connection to it. In an excursus, Behrens discusses the relationship between 11:14-21 and 36:24-28; he concludes that the former is modelled, under Deuteronomistic influence, after the latter. According to Behrens the original vision account in Ezek 8-9* mentions neither the Glory of YHWH nor its exit from Jerusalem. He summarily assumes a major “priestly” exilic redaction that inserts Chapter 10 as well as 11:1-13 and the all-enclosing frame 8:1-4; 11:22-25. According to Behrens, the same group of redactors were also responsible for Ezek 1:4-2:8: by creating two interrelated vision complexes, they enhanced both the theology and the cohesion of the book.

1.2.4 Literature on Ezekiel 37:1-14

The vision of the dead bones, and their resurrection, is undoubtedly among the most famous texts in the book of Ezekiel. Perhaps it was out of unspoken respect for its theological significance that historical-critical research has not questioned the narrative’s unity for a long time. The earliest issue discussed is whether or not the connection of vision (vv. 1-10) and disputation (vv. 11-14) is original. In this, and in the subsequent debate, v. 11 occupies a key position. How an author evaluates the literary unity of v. 11 has direct consequences for his/her view on both the genesis of the passage and its theological interpretation.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 210-251.

⁹⁸ For an overview of literature on Ezek 37:1-14 from 1969 to 2003, see Hubmann, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 111-128. On the importance of v. 11, Hubmann states, “dass in der Tat V. 11 den Angelpunkt des Textes schlechthin darstellt. Von seiner Beurteilung hängt nicht nur die Art der Verbindung von Vision (V. 1-10) und Deutewort (V. 11-14) ab, sondern insgesamt die theologische Gewichtung der einzelnen Teile und damit verbunden auch die Frage nach dem ezechielischem Anteil im Text.” *Ibid.*, 116.

Still ZIMMERLI⁹⁹ defends the literary unity of Ezek 37:1-14. Against opinions in favour of separating the vision (vv. 1-10) from the disputation word (vv. 11-14), Zimmerli argues that neither the shift in genre nor that in the imagery (from unburied bones to buried corpses) is a sufficient reason for assuming different authors for the two parts. Rather, he stresses, the second part is vital to the first because it provides both intention and explanation for the vision itself. The centrepiece uniting both parts is v. 11. Likewise, for Zimmerli the repetitions in vv. 12-14 are due to the genre “expanded proof-saying” and not to redaction. He attributes 37:1-14 in its entirety to Ezekiel and to the early exilic period. He envisions that the passage originally carried a date, probably between the year 586 (as in 33:21) and 574 (as in 40:1).¹⁰⁰ In relation to the other three visions, 37:1-14 is “marked out as different.”¹⁰¹

Here, for once, WEVERS¹⁰² is not in agreement with Zimmerli. He finds the discrepancy of battlefield and graves reason enough to assume (with, for example, Bertholet and Fohrer) two different authors. Whereas Wevers considers 37:1-12c, 14 as Ezekielian, he regards vv. 12d-13, which speak of graves, as “a doublet accretion

⁹⁹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 885-902, especially 888-890.

¹⁰⁰ Christoph Barth, “Ezechiel 37 als Einheit,” in *Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie: Festschrift für Walther Zimmerli zum 70 Geburtstag*, ed. Herbert Donner, Robert Hanhart, and Rudolf Smend (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 39-52 even argues for a unity of the entire Chap. 37. Furthermore, Zimmerli is followed by Hals, *Ezekiel*, 266-272; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 252-271; and Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 208-210. The assumption of literary unity *as a result* of a diachronic analysis is to be distinguished from a synchronic approach *a priori*. Examples of the latter are Marco Nobile, “Ez 37,1-14 come costitutivo di uno schema culturale,” *Bib* 65 (1984): 476-489; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 741-751; E. R. Wendland, “Scattered Bones But a Single Stick: A Rhetorical-stylistic Overview of the Gospel in Ezekiel 37,” *OTE* 12 (1999): 149-172; Samuel E. Almada, “La profecía de Ezequiel: Señales de esperanza para exiliados; Oráculos, visiones y estructuras,” *RIBLA* 35/36 (2000): 103-121; Lawrence Boadt, “The Dramatic Structure of Ezekiel 37:1-14: The Vision of the Dry Bones Revived,” in *Palabra, Prodigio, Poésía: In Memoriam P. Luis Alonso Schökel S.J.*, ed. V. Collado Bertomeu, AnBib 151 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 2003), 191-205. Different again, namely from a textual critical perspective, is the thesis by Ashley Stewart Crane, “The Restoration of Israel: Ezekiel 36-39 in Early Jewish Interpretation: A Textual-Comparative Study of the Oldest Extant Hebrew and Greek Manuscripts” (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2006), especially pp. 110-170.

¹⁰¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 28. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 42*.

¹⁰² Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 276-280.

from a later traditionist.”¹⁰³ He dates the original account, as does Zimmerli, after 587 but long before an end of the exile was actually in sight.

While for Zimmerli the unity of v. 11 led to the declaration of the unity of 37:1-14, for DIETER BALTZER,¹⁰⁴ the exact opposite is the case. In his analysis of 37:1-14, Baltzer is highly suspicious regarding the syntactic correctness, and hence the literary unity, of v. 11. Supposing redaction in v. 11 and perceiving a tension between unburied bones and graves, Baltzer arrives at the assertion of multiple redactions in 37:1-14. In his opinion, only v. 11b_pb truly refers to the vision, whereas the disputation in 37:11a.c-f, 12-13 was originally an autonomous literary unit, and v. 14 is a *Nachinterpretation*, or late gloss.¹⁰⁵ The original vision report (vv. 1-10) is a unity complete in itself. Its connection to the disputation probably occurred because of lexical and content similarities.¹⁰⁶ By inserting v. 11b_pb (and then v. 14), later editors turned the disputation into the vision’s *Deutung*.

In explicit opposition to Baltzer, GARSCHA agrees with Zimmerli that the variance from unburied to buried bones is not a compelling argument for assuming separate authors.¹⁰⁷ He sees this inconsistency caused instead by the specific rhetorical purpose of each image. However, Garscha thinks that vv. 13b_i-14 are redundant and a secondary addition. The basic vision account of 37:1-13b is attributed to “Deutero-Ezekiel,” the same fourth-century redactor that Garscha holds accountable also for the basic narrative of Chapters 8-11* and the visions of the Glory of YHWH in Ezek 1* and 3:22-27.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 277.

¹⁰⁴ Dieter Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterocesaja: Berührungen in der Heilserwartung der beiden großen Exilspropheten*, BZAW 121 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1971), 100-118.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 107f.

¹⁰⁶ “Ez 37:1-10 erscheint formal und thematisch als geschlossen komponierte Einheit, ... [37:11ac, 12-13] scheint ... wohl infolge von Wort- und in entfernterem Maße auch inhaltlich-aussagenmäßiger Assoziation an den Visionsbericht angehängt worden zu sein.” Ibid., 114f.

¹⁰⁷ Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 219-223.

In a monograph on Composition and Theology of the Book of Ezekiel, FRANK-LOTHAR HOSSFELD,¹⁰⁸ on the other hand, adopts the general stance of Baltzer and applies extensive criticism to 37:1-14. Also Hossfeld affirms that 37:1-14 consists of two main basic components: the *vision report* 37:1-11b* and, originally independent, the *disputation word* in vv. 11b[הַמָּוֶה]-13b.¹⁰⁹ While the vision report is, according to Hossfeld, a product of Ezekiel's own reflection on his prophetic ministry and on Israel's fate, it was only later during the exile that a redactor composed the disputation word. By connecting it to the vision report (together with the addition of v. 2c, הַעֲצָמוֹת in 4d, and לְעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה in 5a), the redactor reinterpreted the vision in the sense of a "new exodus."¹¹⁰ The same tendency is reinforced by a subsequent (yet exilic) redaction comprising the tetragram in v. 1b, v. 6d, and most importantly the new finale of vv. 13b_i-14.¹¹¹ Hossfeld finally suspects that the insertion of קוֹל in v. 7c is part of a comprehensive redactional effort directed to harmonizing all vision accounts across the book.

Hossfeld's detailed redaction criticism opened the door to further redaction criticism. Soon afterwards, PETER HÖFFKEN¹¹² casts doubts on the literary unity of the vision itself. He observes that within vv. 7-10 the narrated resurrection is stretched out somewhat artificially over two distinct phases (composition of bodies / revivification) whereas vv. 5-6 seem to announce one single event. Höffken resolves this discrepancy by concluding that the original account features a basic commission with a corresponding realization (37:1-7b, 8a-d, 10c-e). Only later is this expanded, by inserting vv. 7c-e, 8e-10b, into a two-stage *recreatio*.¹¹³ With regard to the

¹⁰⁸ Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie des Ezechielbuches* (Würzburg: Echter, 1977), 341-401.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 369, 397-399.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 399f.

¹¹¹ The author of 37:13b_i-14 is considered as probably the same as for 36:23-32* (*ibid.*, 401).

¹¹² Peter Höffken, "Beobachtungen zu Ezechiel XXXVII 1-10," *VT* 31 (1981): 305-317.

¹¹³ "... eine dem Grundauftrag v. 5 f. entsprechende Ausführung ..., die sekundär im Sinne der zweiphasigen Gestaltung des Gedankens der *recreatio* der Gebeine überformt wurde." *Ibid.*, 308.

disputation word, Höffken agrees with Garscha and Hossfeld that vv. 12-13b are original while vv. 13b_i-14 secondarily extend the duality of the vision onto the disputation (return to the land *and* conveying of YHWH's spirit). Höffken then points out that the redaction – especially the הָרִי as a quasi-autonomous figure in v. 9 – presupposes the influence of “apocalyptic” anthropological ideas, such as the resurrection of the dead. The original vision account, on the other hand, is deemed as “nur im Konnex des Endes von 587/6 sinnvoll.”¹¹⁴

As we have seen, the judgement as to the unity of v. 11 occupies a key position in the debate on the unity of Ezek 37:1-14. It is the merit of RÜDIGER BARTELMUS to have clarified the syntactic structure of 37:11 over against earlier miscomprehensions.¹¹⁵ This first of his two essays on textual-linguistic and grammatical issues with redaction-critical consequences in Ezek 37:1-14 defends the MT of 37:11. Bartelmus concludes that there are neither grammatical nor textual-critical grounds for doubting the inner unity of this verse and, by inference, the genuine unity of vision and disputation in 37:1-14.

A year later, Bartelmus dedicates a second, more comprehensive, essay to 37:1-14,¹¹⁶ in which he builds on Höffken's redaction-critical hypothesis, adding further linguistic-historical arguments. In particular, Bartelmus discusses the unusual recurrence of *w^e-qatal* forms where, in classical Hebrew, one would expect *wayyiqtol* (vv. [2a,] 7a, 8a, 10a). According to his analysis, these occurrences in vv. 7-10 stand very much in tension with the otherwise classical-correct use of Hebrew tenses. Additional observations on the form and structure of 37:1-14, and on the role of the prophet in the events, support the affirmation that the original prophetic word (by

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 316.

¹¹⁵ Rüdiger Bartelmus, “Textkritik, Literarkritik und Syntax: Anmerkungen zur neueren Diskussion um Ez 37:11,” *BN* 25 (1984): 55-64. In particular, Bartelmus argues contra Baltzer and Hossfeld in this regard.

¹¹⁶ Rüdiger Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14, die Verbform *w^eqatal* und die Anfänge der Auferstehungshoffnung,” *ZAW* 97 (1985): 366-389.

Ezekiel) included only vv. 1-6, 7c-e, 8b-d, 10c*-14. Bartelmus suggests that vv. 7ab, 8ae, 9a-10b were inserted by an Aramaic-speaking redactor, probably during the Maccabean era.¹¹⁷ Yet in this case, Bartelmus concludes, the redactor indeed understood the vision as dealing with the eschatological resurrection of the dead – those faithful to YHWH – through the action of the Spirit (portrayed as a divine hypostasis); whereas the original Ezekielian text aimed at the inner-worldly reconstitution of Israel.¹¹⁸

This discussion is taken only partly into account by FUHS.¹¹⁹ ALLEN also ignores Bartelmus's second article, both in his commentary and in an essay on Ezek 37:1-14.¹²⁰ Similarly to Garscha, Allen argues for the unity of 37:1-13. He regards only v. 14 as a redactional addition. Allen believes this verse, which quotes 36:27, was inserted with the intention of connecting 37:1-13 to the preceding oracle. Moreover, from the recapitulation of elements of vv. 1-13 in v. 14, Allen deduces that the verse is meant to improve the account's structure. Besides these redaction-critical considerations, Allen focuses mainly on the text's structure.

A more sophisticated redaction history of the vision of the dead bones is proposed by STEFAN OHNESORGE.¹²¹ His doctoral thesis concentrates on five passages in the book of Ezekiel: 11:14-21; 20:1-44; 36:16-38; 37:1-14, and 37:15-28.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 375. "In Ezek 37,7.8.10 ... [hat] ein aramäisch oder mittelhebräisch sprechender Bearbeiter in den ihm vorliegenden Text des Ezechiel eingegriffen, ... der ... aber die Feinheiten des althebräischen Systems nicht mehr beherrschte" (p. 384). On the grounds for dating this redactor to the Maccabean era, see pp. 385-387.

¹¹⁸ Bartelmus's redaction criticism is adopted e.g. by Thomas Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch*, BZAW 180 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 426-441. Krüger's study focuses mainly on Ezek 5:5-17; 16:1-43; 23:1-30 and 20:1-44 but he discusses, among other texts, also 11:14-21 and 37:1-14. Redaction-critical issues are integral to his study, which, by combining historical-critical and theological-philosophical lines of thought, attempts to trace a development of the conceptions of history in Ezekiel over time.

¹¹⁹ Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 207-210. Concerning the secondary character of vv. 13b_i-14, Fuhs agrees with Garscha, Hossfeld and Höffken. However, Fuhs only mentions Bartelmus briefly as he follows Zimmerli in treating vv. 1-10 as a unified vision report.

¹²⁰ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 184, 187; Leslie C. Allen, "Structure, Tradition and Redaction in Ezekiel's Death Valley Vision," in *Among the Prophets: Language, Image, and Structure in the Prophetic Writings*, ed. Philip R. Davies and David J. A. Clines, JSOTSup 144 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 139-142. Both publications advocate the same ideas and are therefore best discussed together.

¹²¹ Stefan Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu: Zur Sicht der Zukunft Israels nach Ez 11,14-21; 20,1-44; 36,16-38; 37,1-14.15-28*, FB 64 (Würzburg: Echter, 1991), 283-338.

He puts considerable effort into a meticulous redaction criticism, arriving at a very precise layering. This includes a relative and, partially, absolute chronology, which is based mainly on terminological and tradition-historical considerations, and which extends from the sixth century to the Maccabean period. This detailed redaction history then becomes the basis for evaluating the changing outlook on Israel's future throughout the development of the book. Ohnesorge's diachronic analysis of 37:1-14 combines the insights of previous authors.¹²² He arrives at an authentic Ezekielian vision account consisting of vv. 1*-4, 5a*, 5b-6, 7ce, 8bcd, 10c*-11b. This vision account was expanded, in Ohnesorge's opinion, in at least three steps: firstly by the originally independent disputation word of vv. 11c-13b (Hossfeld), which possibly was also authored by Ezekiel; secondly by the addition of vv. 13b_i-14 after the end of the exile (Garscha, Höffken); and thirdly by the insertion of vv. 7abd, 8ae, 9a-10b during the Maccabean period (Bartelmus). Ohnesorge sees this latest redaction influenced by both apocalypticism and wisdom literature, announcing the eschatological resurrection of the martyrs for YHWH. By contrast, the original vision in Ezek 37:1-11* proclaims a purely inner-worldly restoration for the House of Israel.¹²³

Contrary to the majority of redaction critics *and* the synchronic studies, POHLMANN¹²⁴ sees in 37:1-14 essentially a product of what he calls the “golah-oriented redaction,” hence a fifth-century narrative. Only part of the disputation, namely vv. 11c-f, 12a-c, 14, was present already in the exilic “older prophetic book”—but it referred originally to those that had remained in Judah. Pohlmann

¹²² “Mit Ohnesorge ist der Höhepunkt der Literarkritik erreicht, indem alle kritischen Momente des Textes ausgeleuchtet sind.” Hubmann, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 115. This, however, does not signify the end of the discussion.

¹²³ In a similar vein, though simplified again, the study by Harald Martin Wahl, “Tod und Leben: Zur Wiederherstellung Israels nach Ez XXXVII 1-14,” *VT* 49 (1999) reconstructs the original vision account in 37:1-7b, whilst vv. 7c-10 are considered a “second vision” by another hand. The disputation (vv. 11-12, 14) was originally independent and v. 13 is considered as a late gloss. Wahl sees the vision at the root of the subsequent prophetic pronouncement – as opposed to Zimmerli's view that the vision was triggered by the people's saying in v. 11.

¹²⁴ Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 491-499. Summarily also Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 29f.

believes that the “golah-oriented redaction” re-read this word as addressed to the exiles, added vv. 12d-13, and composed the vision account (initially vv. 1-6, 7e, 8b-d, 10c-e) as its illustration. For 37:1-10, Pohlmann largely accepts the results of Bartelmus’s analysis and attributes vv. 7a-d, 8a.e-10b to the Maccabean period, which already reflected the hope in an individual resurrection of the dead.

RUDOLF MOSIS¹²⁵ proposes a redaction-critical hypothesis in variation to that of Bartelmus. In sum, Mosis suggests a basic narrative consisting of 37:1-3, 11-13b, with a secondary expansion in vv. 13b_i-14, and a later redaction in vv. 4-10. He bases his argument, especially regarding vv. 4-10, on observations of discrepancies in content and style between those verses and vv. 1-3, 11-13b, and a respective homogeneity within these two layers. The original account (vv. 1-3, 11-13b) “intends to announce YHWH’s new act of salvation to the exiles in Babylonia, which will open up for them a new future in their land”¹²⁶ and dates (classically) to the early exilic years. Mosis vehemently defends the unity of vv. 4-10 against Höffken, Bartelmus, and Pohlmann; but he agrees with them that the redaction is best dated in the time of the Maccabean wars and that it deals with the resurrection of physically dead people in an eschatological act of “new creation.”

Contemporaneously with Mosis, yet again very differently, BEHRENS arrives at affirming, with Zimmerli, the general literary unity of 37:1-14.¹²⁷ Behrens observes that 37:1-14, in spite of being the most famous vision in Ezekiel, lacks significant formal elements of the genre. He interprets this in view of the text’s particular rhetorical intention because “Ezek 37 deals primarily with an announcement of

¹²⁵ Rudolf Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14: Auferweckung des Volkes—Auferweckung von Toten,” in *Schöpfungsplan und Heilsgeschichte: Festschrift für Ernst Haag zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Renate Brandscheidt and Theresia Mende (Trier: Paulinus, 2002), 123-173.

¹²⁶ “Ezek 37,1-3.11-13a will ... den Exilierten in Babylon ein neues Heilshandeln Jahwes ansagen, das ihnen eine neue Zukunft im Land eröffnen wird.” *Ibid.*, 150. The above translation is mine.

¹²⁷ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 252-271.

salvation, illustrated by a visionary parable.”¹²⁸ An analogous liberty is assumed in linguistic matters; for instance the peculiar use of *w^eqatal* is for Behrens no sufficient indication for redaction.¹²⁹ As for the date of the account, Behrens remains unresolved whether 37:1-14 is “*ezechielisch-frühexilisch*” (in which case he presumes some minor redactional amendments in vv. 1-2) or rather a product of the late exilic “priestly” redaction that Behrens believes responsible for the expansion and interconnection of the vision accounts and the book of Ezekiel in general.

In her dissertation on innerbiblical exegesis in Ezek 34-39, ANJA KLEIN¹³⁰ maps out the redaction history in those chapters. For her, the book of Ezekiel is a pseudepigraphic work that originates in the Persian period, with developments up until the Hellenistic era.¹³¹ On the redaction history of 37:1-14,¹³² Klein takes a stance with those critics who find different authors for the vision (37:1-10) and the disputation (37:11-14). Engaging critically with the range of prior theories on the redaction history, Klein arrives at the following: the original *Totenfeldvision*, which is one of the oldest texts in Ezek 34-39,¹³³ consisted of 37:1, 3-5*, 6fg. Verse 6a-e is an independent gloss. The disputation word of vv. 11-13b (plus vv. 2c, 4d*) was added to the vision by redaction, thereby introducing the new image of the graves.¹³⁴ In a third step, vv. 13b_i-14 re-interpreted the prophecy by underlining the importance for the restoration of the return to the land. The most recent redaction is assumed, in elaboration on Bartelmus, in vv. 2ab, 7-10, though Klein remains doubtful with

¹²⁸ “So geht es in Ez 37 vielmehr um eine Heilsverheißung, die mit einem visionären Gleichnis illustriert wird.” Ibid., 266. (The above translation is mine.)

¹²⁹ For Behrens’s criticism on Bartelmus, see *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 256 note 16.

¹³⁰ Klein, *Schriftauslegung*. See also her article “Prophecy Continued: Reflections on Innerbiblical Exegesis in the Book of Ezekiel,” *VT* 60 (2010): 573-575.

¹³¹ Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 350-406.

¹³² Ibid., 270-300.

¹³³ Ibid., 350; on p. 394 Klein determines 37:1-6* as part of the oldest version of the book of Ezekiel.

¹³⁴ A very similar, if simplified, idea is put forward by KARIN SCHÖPFLIN, “The Revivification of the Dry Bones: Ezekiel 37:1-14,” in *The Human Body in Death and Resurrection*, ed. Tobias Nicklas, Friedrich Vinzenz Reiterer, and Jozef Verheyden (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 78f., 83. Schöpflin defines the oldest (post-exilic) part of 37:1-14 as 37:1-5, 6fg, 10-13b, with v. 6a-e being a *Fortschreibung* dependent on Job 10:11. However, she fails to produce adequate argumentation for her opinion.

regard to the suggested second-century date.¹³⁵ Klein's book is interesting insofar as she develops a thesis of changing innerbiblical allusions according to which the oldest texts "draw on motifs and metaphors," whereas in later additions "the textual references increase," until "in the latest redactional stages, literary references to different texts within and beyond the book are assembled and systematised" to the point that "one could even speak of literary quotations."¹³⁶

In the book by JOHANNES SCHNOCKS¹³⁷ on Old Testament foundations of a biblical resurrection theology, a chapter is dedicated to an extensive analysis of Ezek 37:1-14. Schnocks refutes Bartelmus's linguistic-historical arguments regarding the past-tense use of *w^eqatal* and the usual dating of the consequently assumed redaction in vv. 7-10 to the Maccabean era.¹³⁸ In fact, he is not convinced by any of the previous redaction-critical suggestions. From his text observations, Schnocks arrives at attributing only v. 6a-e and vv. 13b_i-14 to redaction, finding in both cases of *Wiederaufnahme* and tensions to the context.¹³⁹ Due to an assumed similarity to 36:24-36 and the textual-critical issues about this passage (lacking in P⁹⁶⁷) Schnocks dates the redaction "in die Jahrzehnte um 100 v. Chr.,"¹⁴⁰ thus later than all other scholars. The main innovation, however, concerns the basic account. Based on its being out of line with the other visions in Ezekiel, on the peculiarities of vv. 9-10, and on connections to other secondary passages, Schnocks argues that 37:1-5, 6f-13b originate only in the immediate post-exilic period.¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 270-285 and 373-380.

¹³⁶ All quotes: Klein, "Prophecy Continued," 581. Cf. Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 384-388.

¹³⁷ Johannes Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung: Studien zur alttestamentlichen Grundlegung einer gesamtbiblischen Theologie der Auferstehung*, BBB 158 (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009), 161-243. See in particular his literature overview on pp. 174-184.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 172-174, 177-179.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 222-226.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 226-232 (citation p. 232).

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 232-235. Schnocks sees this in conjunction with Konkel's "first expansion" (see below 1.2.5).

1.2.5 Literature on Ezekiel 40-48

In the case of the second temple vision, Ezek 40-48, it seems obligatory to begin the literature review with one author who wrote prior to Zimmerli, namely HARTMUT GESE.¹⁴² For it is Gese who offers, in his modest-sized doctoral thesis of 1957, the first comprehensive and consistent redaction history for Ezek 40-48, exerting a significant influence on most authors after him. Gese proposes three independent basic sources: the *Führungsvision* (guidance vision), including 40:1-37, 47-49; 41:1-4; the *nasi-Schicht* (prince layer), consisting of 44:1-3; 45:21-25; 46:1-10, 12;¹⁴³ and the *Šadoqidenschicht* (Zadokite layer), comprising 40:46c; 44:6-16, 28-30a; 45:13-15.¹⁴⁴ Of these three sources the guidance vision is the oldest. Gese assumes that each source underwent redaction (for example 41:5-26 and Chapter 42 are seen as additions to the guidance vision) already before the three were joined together in a complex editorial process. Gese attributes the explicitly visionary pieces outside of Ezek 40-42 (i.e. 43:1-11; 44:4-5; 47:1-12) to this uniting redaction, hence to a very late stage.

In revision of this model, ZIMMERLI endeavours to integrate Gese's three-source proposal into his own *Fortschreibung* theory.¹⁴⁵ He does this essentially by giving up the postulated independence between the Zadokite layer and the prince layer; instead, he considers them as subsequent expansions, or clusters of expansions. Zimmerli agrees that the guidance vision (40:1-37, 47-49; 41:1-4) is the oldest component; however, he assumes that this original vision account was successively enlarged in two major steps by Ezekiel himself. The resulting *erweiterte*

¹⁴² Hartmut Gese, *Der Verfassungsentwurf des Ezechiel (Kap 40-48): Traditionsgeschichtlich untersucht*, BHT 25 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1957); on the redaction history see especially pp. 31-33, 108-123.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 85, 114-120.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 67, 112f.

¹⁴⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 976-1249 (redaction history summary on pp. 1240-1249). For Zimmerli's thematic, not redaction-critical, interpretation of Ezek 40-48, see also his essay "Planungen für den Wiederaufbau nach der Katastrophe von 587," *VT* 18 (1968): 229-255.

Visionsbericht consists of 40:1-37, 47-49; 41:1-15a₂; 42:15-20; 43:1-11(12); 44:1-2; 47:1-12e. In other words, Zimmerli attributes a number of passages, including 43:1-11 and 47:1-12e, to Ezekiel—even though he considers them as secondary. The expanded vision account “has then subsequently been enriched by a wealth of further additions,” which lack visionary characteristics but show “an increasing realism in the reflections in view of the imminent new beginning in the land.”¹⁴⁶ Zimmerli dates the “prince” regulations (44:3; 45:21-46:12) to the late exilic period (571-538), with 48:1-29 (and possibly 40:38-46a₂) being inserted before that. The “Zadokite” redactions with their animosity against the Levites and concern for spheres of holiness (40:46c; 44:6-31; 45:1-8, 9, 13-15; 46:19-24; 48:30-35) are early post-exilic, added “immediately before the reinstatement of the cult.”¹⁴⁷ The sections 43:18-27; 45:18-20 (and perhaps 41:5-15a₂; 42:1-14) are considered as post-exilic.

In the following decades, a fresh redaction history of Ezek 40-48 is advanced only rarely; several commentaries merely include partial observations without proposing a comprehensive redaction history.¹⁴⁸ The model by Gese and Zimmerli becomes *opinio maioris*, over against only a small deviating minority (Vogt, Tuell, and more recently Rudnig and Konkel). This relative scarcity of redaction-critical studies on Ezek 40-48 is undoubtedly due to the text’s inherent difficulties.¹⁴⁹ On the

¹⁴⁶ Both quotations: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 549. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1243.

¹⁴⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 553. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1248. For Zimmerli, this is not a unified layer but a group of redactions that occurred in approximately the same span of time.

¹⁴⁸ For example: Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 38, 295-343; Hals, *Ezekiel*, 285-347; and Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 212-287. All of these authors propose minor changes but largely stick to the Gese/Zimmerli model. In the following, the literature review will only present publications with a different redaction theory.

¹⁴⁹ Especially in the earlier times of critical analysis, particular problems were raised by the “highly nomistic and no less priestly” character of these chapters while “critical inquiry into biblical tradition was conceived and nurtured mostly by men whose outlook was molded by theologies whose origins lay in the Protestant Reformation”—a combination which certainly has not favoured the appreciation of Ezekiel’s last vision. Jon Douglas Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40-48*, HSM 10 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1976; repr., 1986), 1. Levenson’s study is concerned with the tradition history of the religious ideas expressed in Ezek 40-48, in particular: the Zion and Eden motifs in tension to the Sinai themes; the *nāšî* and his messianic connotations; the role and organisation of the land and of the priesthood. Levenson draws on Gese and Zimmerli where redaction-critical issues are of significance.

other hand, there are, from the 1980's onward, a respectable number of synchronic studies on the second temple vision.¹⁵⁰

The first alternative model is that by VOGT.¹⁵¹ He mainly strives to define the original temple vision; i.e. he gives less attention to the secondary portions. Vogt's starting point is 40:1-2, which he regards as the introduction to an authentic vision by the prophet. Consequently, his main criterion for authenticity is whether or not a section bears the character of an ecstatic experience. Contrary to his predecessors, Vogt denies Ezekielian authorship for the entire description of the temple (40:3-42:20) but assumes a comparatively small *Grundbestand* of 40:1-2; 43:4-6a, 7a-c; 47:1b, 2c, 6ab, 8b-f, 9ehi, 12a-e.¹⁵² Vogt supposes three major strands of expansion to this vision account, concerning the measurements of the temple (Ezek 40-42), a collection of laws (Ezek 44-46), and an appendix about the land and the city (Ezek 47-48). Neither expansion is homogeneous but has itself grown throughout a

¹⁵⁰ Whilst Greenberg never arrived at completing his commentary, he expressed his views on Ezek 40-48 in an extensive journal article: Greenberg, "Program of Restoration," 181-208. Further examples are: Susan Niditch, "Ezekiel 40-48 in a Visionary Context," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 208-224; Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "The Wall around Paradise: Ezekielian Ideas about the Future," *VT* 37 (1987): 271-279; Marco Nobile, "Ez 38-39 ed Ez 40-48: i due aspetti complementari del culmine di uno schema culturale di fondazione," *Anton* 62 (1987): 141-171; Rimmon Kasher, "Anthropomorphism, Holiness and Cult: A New Look at Ezekiel 40-48," *ZAW* 110 (1998): 192-208; Hanna Liss, "'Describe the Temple to the House of Israel': Preliminary Remarks on the Temple Vision in the Book of Ezekiel and the Question of Fictionality in Priestly Literature," in *Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi, *PFES* 92 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 122-143; Paul M. Joyce, "Ezekiel 40-42: The Earliest 'Heavenly Ascent' Narrative?," in *The Book of Ezekiel and its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge and Johannes Tromp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 17-41; Bennett Simon, "Ezekiel's Geometric Vision of the Restored Temple: From the Rod of his Wrath to the Reed of his Measuring," *HTR* 102, no. 4 (2009): 411-438; John T. Strong, "Grounding Ezekiel's Heavenly Ascent: A Defense of Ezek 40-48 as a Program for Restoration," *SJOT* 26, no. 2 (2012): 192-211. Also the thesis by Corrine L. Patton, "Ezekiel's Blueprint for the Temple of Jerusalem" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1991) and the monographs by Duguid, *Ezekiel and the Leaders of Israel* and Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation* comment on Ezek 40-48 from a synchronic approach. Stevenson's study has a decidedly rhetorical focus, looking at the concepts of territorial claims, spatial holiness, and access to and inheritance of territory, as well as the structure of the vision and of its context. She emphasises the inherent criticism of monarchy and interprets Ezek 40-48 as proposing a new, alternative society devoid of a human king and centred on the temple.

¹⁵¹ Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 127-175.

¹⁵² See the overview on p. 174. Vogt states confidently, "Es kann kein Zweifel bestehen darüber, dass alle diese drei Texte [*scil.* introduction, return of the Glory, and temple stream] zusammengehören und eine einzige ekstatische Schau bilden. Die drei Szenen setzen einander voraus und jede schliesst unmittelbar und vollkommen an die vorhergehende an." *Ibid.*, 175.

process of redaction, which however is not, or only cursorily, discussed. Additional glosses and short expansions were also inserted into the basic account.

Vogt is followed in his delineation of the original second temple vision by FUHS.¹⁵³ Moreover, the commentary circumscribes the oldest parts of the secondary temple description as 40:6-37, 47-49; 41:1-15a₂; 42:15-18. Fuhs occasionally defines a chronology of insertions; for example, 45:1-8 is dependent on 47:13-48:35, and 44:4-31 “setzen deutlich nachexilische Verhältnisse voraus.”¹⁵⁴ Yet on the whole he seems content to remain within Vogt’s redaction-critical framework.

Another fresh approach is offered by STEVEN S. TUELL.¹⁵⁵ Instead of assuming a redaction history in multiple layers (*Fortschreibung*), Tuell argues for a basic vision account by the prophet Ezekiel that was extended “in a single, purposive redaction, aimed at producing a religious polity for restoration Judea.”¹⁵⁶ Nonetheless, Tuell remains relatively close to Zimmerli when he defines his original account as including 40:1-42:20*; 43:1-7c; 44:1-2; 47:1-12; 48:30-35;¹⁵⁷ its main characteristics, for Tuell, are the use of first person singular, the descriptive nature, and the focus “on the divine promise of eternal presence.”¹⁵⁸ The expansion, which Tuell calls the “Law of the Temple,” consists of three major pieces: 43:10-27; 44:3-46:18; 48:1-29. These are legislative in nature and employ the second person; they were inserted in an artful way to form a new coherent account. Tuell dates the redaction to the Persian period, probably during the reign of Darius I (522-486). In his view, it reflects the effort of the post-exilic Judean community to meet Persian

¹⁵³ Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 224-265. See the summary on pp. 224-226.

¹⁵⁴ Both examples and citation: *ibid.*, 249.

¹⁵⁵ Steven Shawn Tuell, *The Law of the Temple in Ezekiel 40-48*, HSM 49 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁵⁷ Eight years prior, Tuell defined the basic vision a little differently, as 40:1-38, 40:47-41:5, 13-15; 42:15-20; 43:1-7c; 44:1-3; 47:1-12, using the criteria of first-person narrative and presence of the measuring guide. Tuell, “Temple Vision,” 98f.

¹⁵⁸ See the summary in Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 75 and Table 2 (76f.). In a later journal article, “Ezekiel 40-42 as Verbal Icon,” *CBQ* 58 (1996), Tuell interprets Ezek 40-42 “as an actual visionary journey to the heavenly temple” (p. 657).

religious and legal conditions, by adapting Ezekiel's vision to the extant temple laws of the Persian Empire.

Yet another approach is inspired by Pohlmann's redaction criticism. His student THILO A. RUDNIG, author of the contribution on Ezek 40-48 in the second volume of Pohlmann's commentary,¹⁵⁹ applies his teacher's model already one year prior in his doctoral thesis.¹⁶⁰ Rudnig sees the oldest version of the vision account as the fulfilment of the restoration promises in 20:39-44; 37:25-28,¹⁶¹ along the lines of temple, prince, and land. However, for Rudnig this basic account is not exilic, but a product of the "golah-oriented" redaction in the fifth century.¹⁶² The redaction combines material from shortly after 539 (temple: 40:17, 28a*, 47d-49*; 41:1-4*, 15b-20a, prince: 45:17a, 21a, 22-25; 46:4-7, land: 47:13bc*, 15b-20), with self-authored sections (40:1, 2bc*, 4*; 43:6a, 7abc; 44:5a-d; 47:1, 8*, 9db₂hi, 12a-e; 48:35bc).¹⁶³ Additionally, Rudnig finds more than a dozen later redactional insertions,¹⁶⁴ which he categorizes into three main phases. Following the "golah-oriented" redaction, and in vehement opposition to it, is the "diaspora-oriented" expansion (dated to the second half of the fifth century). It inserts the units 43:7d-9*; 44:6-7*; 45:8c-9; 46:16-18; 47:13c*, 14-15a, 21; 48:1-8a₁b, 23*, 24-29, with the intent "die Optionen und Zukunftsperspektiven der golaorientierten Redaktion einzuschränken und umzuinterpretieren."¹⁶⁵ Subsequently, a series of mainly

¹⁵⁹ Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 527-631.

¹⁶⁰ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*. See also the extensive review on Rudnig's book by Michael Konkel, "Die Gola von 597 und die Priester: Zu einem Buch von Thilo Alexander Rudnig," *ZABR* 8 (2002): 357-383.

¹⁶¹ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 58-64.

¹⁶² This redaction is originally postulated by Pohlmann for large parts of Ezek 1-39. On Pohlmann's redaction-historical theory, see above 1.2.1.2.

¹⁶³ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 345-349; Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 532f., 538 (summaries). Altogether, Rudnig's basic vision account encompasses 40:1, 2bc*, 4*, 17, 28a*; 40:47d-41:4*; 41:15b-20a; 43:6a, 7abc; 44:5a-d; 45:17a, 21a, 22-25; 46:4-7; 47:1, 8*, 9db₂hi, 12a-e, 13bc*, 15b-20; 48:35bc.

¹⁶⁴ For the exact statistics and relative chronology of all thirteen layers, see Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 373f.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 232-243, 351-354 (quote: 351); Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 533f. Also this redaction layer is inspired by the homonymous layer in Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*. Contrary to the latter, however, Rudnig assumes that the diaspora-oriented expansions in Ezek 43-48 derive from

descriptive and jurisdictional texts are attributed to priestly circles throughout the fourth century. For instance, the “sacral layer” (40:6-16*, 18-27*, 28b-37*, 47abc; 41:5-15a₂, 26; 42:1-12, 13*, 20b-e) notably expands the temple description, giving it its characteristic aim to protect the holy from the profane outside world.¹⁶⁶ Other priestly additions seek for example to diminish the role of the prince and of the Levites. Altogether, the priestly insertions are: 44:6-16* (“policy statement”); 46:1-3, 8-11 (festivals); 45:1-8b; 48:8a₂-23* (*t^erûmā*); 43:13-24*; 45:15a_i-16, 17b-20a; 46:19-24 (“*sühntheologisches Beziehungsgeflecht*”).¹⁶⁷ Lastly, a group of quantitatively small but theologically significant insertions from the fourth to the early third century finalize the transition pieces 43:10-12; 44:1-3, 4-5¹⁶⁸ and the visionary sections. Rudnig attributes the appearance of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה (43:4, 5c), or כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (43:1-2*), to two distinct redactions *K1* and *K2*, respectively.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, he considers the figure of the man, who guides and measures, as added by an even later redaction, comprising 40:3, 4 [שָׂרָף]; 42:15-20a; 43:6b; 47:3-7* and the מִדָּ מִדָּ formulae throughout Chapters 40-42.¹⁷⁰ In Rudnig’s opinion, these “hypostases” and “intermediaries” have apocalyptic traits and serve to prevent any direct contact between YHWH and Ezekiel.

Published a year later, the study by MICHAEL KONKEL¹⁷¹ draws again on the propositions of Gese and Zimmerli, though developing his own redaction-critical theory. Combining diverse approaches, Konkel begins his work with a short

one single reviser; they pre-date the diaspora-oriented additions in Ezek 1-39 (*Heilig und Profan*, 252f.).

¹⁶⁶ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 266-269, 355.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 244-330, 356-364.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 364f.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 83-93, 337-342, 366. He sees an analogous process for Ezek 8-11.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 78-80, 101-110, 337-342, 366f.

¹⁷¹ Michael Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen: Studien zur zweiten Tempelvision Ezechiels (Ez 40-48)*, BBB 129 (Berlin: Philo, 2001). A synthesis of his book is published as Michael Konkel, “Die zweite Tempelvision Ezechiels (Ez 40-48): Dimensionen eines Entwurfs,” in *Gottesstadt und Gottesgarten: Zur Geschichte und Theologie des Jerusalemer Tempels*, ed. Othmar Keel and Erich Zenger, QD 191 (Freiburg: Herder, 2002), 154-179.

synchronic overview of the structure of Ezek 40-48¹⁷² before he engages in more detailed, text-critical, synchronic and diachronic analyses of short units.¹⁷³ These results are then summarized into a redaction history, which in turn is the foundation for tradition-historical investigations.¹⁷⁴ Konkel discerns three main strata in Ezek 40-48: an original layer with two major redactional expansions (“*Grundschicht*,” “*erste Fortschreibung*,” “*zweite Fortschreibung*”), plus a number of minor additions that are either later or not exactly datable.¹⁷⁵ The original account comprises 40:1, 3-37, 44-46a₂, 47-49; 41:1-15a₂; 42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 3f-10: the temple description and the return of YHWH. Konkel sees it in competition to the Babylonian claim to power; at the same time the temple description aims at the horizontal separation of holy and profane domains. He dates the basic layer to exilic times, perhaps elicited by Jehoiachin’s release in 562.¹⁷⁶ Subsequently, the first expansion is defined as 40:2; 43:3a₁-d; 44:1-3; 46:1-3, 8-10, 12; 47:1-21; 48:1-10, 13-21b, 23-29.¹⁷⁷ It approximates the temple vision to its present form, adding parts of Gese’s “prince layer,” the scheme of land distribution, and the vision of the river, along with connections to the other visions of the book. Konkel dates this layer to the end of the exile, around 539-515. The second expansion, 40:38-43, 46c; 42:1-14; 43:11-27; 44:4-30a(31); 45:1-25; 46:4-7, (11), 16-24; 47:22-23; 48:11-12, includes additions to the temple building as well as cult legislation and Gese’s “Zadokite layer.”¹⁷⁸ Its xenophobic tendency suggests a date in the second-temple period (after 515). Konkel argues for it being a criticism, by a certain group of priests, against the temple cult of that time.

¹⁷² Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 23-27. He finds three main blocks (40:1-42:20; 43:13-46:24; 47:13-48:35) that are connected by transition sections (43:1-12; 47:1-12).

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 28-224.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 225-243 and 244-357, respectively.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 236-243.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 236, 239 on the definition of the basis layer; on its characterisation and date see pp. 244-270.

¹⁷⁷ On the definition of the first expansion see *ibid.*, 239f.; on its characterisation see pp. 270-286; on its date: p. 286.

¹⁷⁸ On the definition of the second expansion see *ibid.*, 240-243; on its characterisation and date see pp. 286-348.

1.2.6 Literature Specifically on all Vision Accounts in Ezekiel

As mentioned above, despite the respectable amount of literature on the book of Ezekiel, studies focussing specifically and exclusively on its vision accounts are rare. Of the literature presented above, some non-commentary monographs discuss at least three of the four major vision accounts in Ezekiel,¹⁷⁹ but even these publications treat the visions as separate text units; the main focus is never systematically on their interconnectedness. The mutual relation of the vision accounts has been addressed, apart from publications focussing on vision accounts in general,¹⁸⁰ only in a small number of journal articles. Two are mentioned here in particular.¹⁸¹

In order to find an example for a diachronic analysis that takes into account all four major vision accounts together, we need to go back as far as the year 1955: EBERHARD BAUMANN's essay "Examining Ezekiel's Main Visions: Their Interrelation With Regard to Chronology and Subject Matter"¹⁸² actually distinguishes six main visions (1:1, 4-28; 2:3-3:9; 9:3a, 10:3-11:23*; 37:1-14; 43:1-7a; 40-[42?]) and outlines the connections between them both from a redaction-historical perspective and pertaining to their content. Baumann separates Ezekiel's call (2:3-3:9) from the "chariot" vision in Ezek 1 and argues that the latter was

¹⁷⁹ These are, for instance: Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*; Vogt, *Untersuchungen*; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*.

¹⁸⁰ There are some (mainly synchronic) studies on vision reports that, among others, also deal briefly with those in Ezekiel; for example: Moses Sister, "Die Typen der prophetischen Visionen in der Bibel," *MGWJ*, no. 4 (1934); Friedrich Horst, "Die Visionsschilderungen der alttestamentlichen Propheten," *EvT* 20, no. 5 (1960); Long, "Prophetic Call Traditions"; "Reports of Visions among the Prophets," *JBL* 95 (1976); Klaus Koch, "Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala 12-17 August 1979*, ed. David Hellholm (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 413-446; Jean Marcel Vincent, *Das Auge hört: Die Erfahrbarkeit Gottes im Alten Testament*, BTSt 34 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1998); "Ils virent la voix: Réflexions théologiques sur la vision dans l'Ancien Testament," *ETR* 78 (2003); and Fred Blumenthal, "The Prophetic Visions of God's Abode," *JBQ* 32 (2004).

¹⁸¹ An additional example would be the article by Kirsten Nielsen, "Ezekiel's Visionary Call as Prologue: From Complexity and Changeability to Order and Stability?," *JSOT* 33 (2008): 99-114. She enquires about the meaning of the tension between the "complexity and changeability" in Ezek 1 and the "order and stability" described in Ezek 40-48. Although the article does not take into account redaction-critical questions, it is nevertheless one of the few publications concerned with the literary function of the interrelation of Ezekiel's vision accounts.

¹⁸² Eberhard Baumann, "Die Hauptvisionen Hesekiels in ihrem zeitlichen und sachlichen Zusammenhang untersucht," *ZAW* 67 (1955): 56-67. The above translation of the title is mine.

originally situated before the vision of the resurrection (37:1-14). The vision of the “chariot” in 10:3-11:23* is, for Baumann, the older report of “one and the same event” as narrated in 1:4-28.¹⁸³ Interestingly, Baumann does not acknowledge Ezek 8 as a vision account at all, which is probably connected to his belief that Ezekiel was in Jerusalem until 587.¹⁸⁴ Important for Baumann is the analogy of the spirit (*hārūach*) and the glory (*kēbōd*)¹⁸⁵ of YHWH throughout the visions. He proposes a chronological sequence for the visions that follows the presence of YHWH from Jerusalem (2:3-3:9 and 9:3a; 10:3-11:23*) as it goes to meet and resurrect the exiled people in Babylonia (1:1, 4-28; 37:1-14). This becomes the precondition for YHWH’s return and the erection of a new temple (43:1-7a; 40-[42?]). The brevity of the article does permit in-depth argumentation, yet it seems to be the only publication specifically on the topic of Ezekiel’s interconnected visions and their redaction history.

In contrast, the article by HENRY VAN DYKE PARUNAK on “The Literary Architecture of Ezekiel’s *mar’ōt ’ēlōhīm*”¹⁸⁶ focuses on the present text in analysing the structure, and structural interconnection, of Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48. In particular, van Dyke Parunak identifies a set of formulae and common motifs that provide links between these three visionary texts: the term מְרִאוֹת אֱלֹהִים; the combination of רָחַץ as the subject of נָשָׂא with Ezekiel as object; a date connected to the expression “the hand of YHWH upon”; the transportation of the prophet; the Glory of YHWH. Moreover, each vision is taken up at the centre of the subsequent vision: the throne-chariot (1:4-28) in Chapter 10, and the temple tour in 43:1-46:24

¹⁸³ Ibid., 57f.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 60.

¹⁸⁵ Transcriptions as used by Baumann.

¹⁸⁶ H. van Dyke Parunak, “The Literary Architecture of Ezekiel’s *mar’ōt ’ēlōhīm*,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 61-74. The article is a condensed version of the central part of his doctoral thesis: Henry van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies in Ezekiel” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1978), 115-525. There, he covers the entire book of Ezekiel, seeing the three interconnected מְרִאוֹת אֱלֹהִים at the basis of the book’s structure (pp. 117f.) but excluding 37:1-14 from this network. Decisive is “the presence of the glory of the Lord, whose movements have tied together the three *mar’ōt ’ēlōhīm*, and thus the entire book” (p. 525).

[sic].¹⁸⁷ The motifs of the previous vision are adapted in the following account so as to suit the respective purpose. Van Dyke Parunak's analysis describes the visions as applications of established patterns: prophetic call narrative (1:1-3:15), *rîb* pattern (8-11) and exodus-settlement (40-48).¹⁸⁸

1.2.7 Summary and Aim of the Present Thesis

This literature review has considered a selection of publications about Ezekiel's vision accounts from 1969 onward, in view of their redaction-critical analysis. Zimmerli's *Fortschreibungsmodell*, which assumes a gradual expansion, both by the first author himself and by his *school*, is still the most influential model. To a varying extent, for instance the views on the vision accounts of Wevers, Garscha,¹⁸⁹ Vogt, Fuhs, Hossfeld, and Allen depend on him. In his analyses, Zimmerli's main interest is it to reconstruct an earliest, original, version of the account; he spends less effort on redaction history. Vogt demonstrates, though influenced by Zimmerli, very independent ideas in relation to many redaction-critical issues. He includes redaction history but he also tends to discuss longer texts (such as Ezek 8-11) in segments and does not always relate these to each other. Allen (whose main concern really is with questions of structure) somewhat simplifies Zimmerli's theory by finding in most texts three layers: the basic account; a redaction that remains similar to it and is therefore attributed to Ezekiel at a later stage; and a second redaction that in various aspects is unlike the first two and so is credited to the *Ezekiel school*. While Zimmerli and the majority of scholars¹⁹⁰ tend to consider the sixth-century prophet Ezekiel responsible for as much of the vision accounts as

¹⁸⁷ See the graphic in: van Dyke Parunak, "Literary Architecture," 62.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 62, 67, 72, respectively.

¹⁸⁹ Although Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch* in principle takes a redaction-critical stance opposed to Zimmerli, pertaining to 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 37:1-14 he follows Zimmerli surprisingly closely (except for dating all layers much later).

¹⁹⁰ Besides Zimmerli, for example Wevers, Vogt, Hossfeld, Fuhs, Hals, Allen, Behrens, and of course Greenberg along with many authors who work synchronically.

possible, a minority – in particular Garscha, Pohlmann, Rudnig, and Klein – date most of the book, including the vision accounts, to post-exilic times, from the fifth century onward.

Surprisingly little literature focuses on the deliberate interrelatedness of the vision accounts; even though it is undisputed that this is a prominent feature in Ezekiel, there is – to my knowledge – no recent extended work specifically on the vision accounts in Ezekiel as an interconnected text corpus.

The closest to this are: the monograph by Behrens, which however includes vision accounts from various prophetic books and excludes Ezek 40-48 from the analysis; the thesis and essay by van Dyke Parunak from a synchronic perspective only; and the dated article by Baumann, which gives but a brief summary of ideas.¹⁹¹

In studies and commentaries that are concerned with the book of Ezekiel overall, more or less detailed remarks on the visions' shared terminology and their book-structuring function are commonplace.¹⁹² Allen, to give only one example, finds on the level of the finished book a "pattern of compilation" in the sequence of vision + sign-act (1:1-3:15/ 3:22-5:17; 8:1-11:25/ 12:1-20; 37:1-14/ 15-28), and he sees 40-48 as the literary "reversal" of 8-11.¹⁹³ There is also a rudimentary correlation of the redaction histories in Behrens, as he assumes the same *priesterschriftlich geprägten Kreise* to be responsible for 1:4-2:8, for the redaction in Ezek 10, and perhaps also for 37:1-14.¹⁹⁴ Of interest is the observation by Klein for

¹⁹¹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen* (2002); van Dyke Parunak, "Structural Studies," and "Literary Architecture" (1978/1980); Baumann, "Hauptvisionen Hesekiels" (1955).

¹⁹² For example in the introduction of Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 40*-42*. Briefer in Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 21 ("klaren buchstrukturierenden Gestaltungswillen"), and even in short commentaries such as Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 42f.; and Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 4f.

¹⁹³ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, xxvi and xxxiv, respectively.

¹⁹⁴ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 238, 270. Behrens concludes his chapter on the Ezekielian vision accounts with a question for future studies, "ob die hier ... zu Tage getretenen Ergebnisse auch einen neuen Blick auf die redaktionellen und buchkonzeptionellen Prozesse im Rahmen der Fortschreibung des Ezechielbuches gestatten" (p. 271). The relationship between Ezek 1 and Ezek 10, in terms of reciprocal influence, is discussed now and then, e.g. by Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, "Ezekiel 1," 147-154.

Ezek 34-39, that the techniques of alluding to other biblical texts are changing in the course of redaction.¹⁹⁵

However, apart from such brief remarks, the main emphasis is usually not on the interrelation of the visions, and even less on the question of whether their mutual relationship is original or redactional. In all publications considered, the redaction history of each vision account is examined fundamentally in isolation from the other accounts.

Furthermore, there are studies that reflect on the visions because they are discussing an associated topic, as is the case for example with Kutsko's book on divine presence and absence in Ezekiel.¹⁹⁶ There the vision accounts are looked at from a pre-defined angle, which usually does not include questions of their interrelationship.

Other publications again concentrate their attention on one vision account only – for example Konkel and Rudnig on Ezek 40-48.¹⁹⁷

An additional issue, which could not emerge as clearly from this literature review, is that most authors who apply diachronic methods, such as redaction criticism, to the book of Ezekiel typically write little on the impact that the proposed redaction history has for the theology and meaning of the book.¹⁹⁸ On the other hand, scholars with a markedly theological focus tend to have, explicitly or implicitly, a synchronic view on the text.

For his part, Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 252 admits that a more thorough analysis of Ezek 8-11 would require the analysis of Ezek 40-48; but since he deals only with Ezek 1-39 this remains unrealised.

¹⁹⁵ Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 384-388.

¹⁹⁶ Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*.

¹⁹⁷ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*.

¹⁹⁸ For example in Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 3-85, the (mainly diachronic) analysis of 1:1-3:15 fills eighty pages, versus about 2 ½ pages on the account's "aim."

It is the aim of the present thesis to fill the outlined gaps and to stimulate further discussion. The topic of this thesis is a redaction-critical and theological study on the vision accounts in the book of Ezekiel, considering them as mutually related narratives.¹⁹⁹ This means a special focus on the redaction history of the vision accounts, both in themselves and as they are in interrelation and interdependence. This thesis will carry out a detailed diachronic analysis of all four major vision accounts in Ezekiel (1:1-3:15 [+ 22-27]; 8-11; 37:1-14; 40-48); subsequently, it will seek to explore how the network of vision accounts was created, and advanced, from the original all the way through the various redactional stages. This redaction-critical enquiry will be complemented by an investigation of exemplary themes regarding the visions' discourse, rhetoric and theology, including their development and, possibly, modification over time. In this way, redaction-critical analysis and literary methods that are typically used in a synchronic approach, will work together in helping to understand and elaborate the theological responses of Ezekiel and his followers to the great crisis of their times.

1.3 Defining the Basis Texts: What is a Vision Account?

Before moving on, it is necessary to pinpoint what exactly is meant by the term *vision account*. Although readers will usually spontaneously recognize a vision as such, for a long time there was no formal definition of the genre. Attempts at categorizing vision reports in the twentieth century²⁰⁰ placed much emphasis on content-based criteria, which inevitably were very susceptible to subjectivity. The

¹⁹⁹ The term *narratives* implies that I see the vision accounts as literature, not as stenographs of an experience: "narratives are not direct reproductions of reality; they are works of art, created by the human mind and intended for an audience." Ellen F. Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll: Textuality and the Dynamics of Discourse in Ezekiel's Prophecy*, JSOTSup 78 (Sheffield: Almond, 1989), 107. For the purpose of this thesis, any pre-textual form of Ezekiel's visions – if any existed – is not relevant.

²⁰⁰ Behrens draws on this literature and includes their findings in his research; he names in particular: Sister, "Typen der prophetischen Visionen," 399-430; Horst, "Visionsschilderungen," 193-205; Long, "Prophetic Call Traditions," 494-500; "Reports of Visions," 353-365.

form-critical study by Achim Behrens,²⁰¹ through comparing prophetic vision accounts in the books of Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah, 1 Kings, Ezekiel, Zechariah and Daniel, provides an efficient formal-linguistic description of the genre prophetic vision account, which will find ample use throughout this thesis. His set of criteria is outlined in the following:

- Every vision account consists of two parts: a visionary part (what the prophet sees and hears) and a speech part, involving God (or a divine messenger) and sometimes also the prophet, which helps to interpret the vision.

Visionary Part:

- The vision is typically introduced by a finite form of ראה followed by הנה and a verbless clause. This combination is called a surprise clause.²⁰² The verb ראה may be substituted by a movement verb, such as בוא (“guidance vision”).²⁰³
- There are no fixed rules for the subsequent description of the actual sight and/or audition; its terminology and length may vary significantly.

Speech Part or Dialogue Part:

- The transition to the dialogue part is evidenced by a speech introduction employing אמר; most often the precise form is ויאמר.
- Regardless of whether it is the heavenly or the human agent who first rises to speak, the opening sentence is always a direktiver Sprechakt, i.e. either a question or an imperative.
- A dialogue may or may not develop; in any case, it is always God (or the divine messenger) who has the final say, never the prophet.

²⁰¹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60. For the research history on this matter see pp. 14-31.

²⁰² This expression seems to be coined by Francis I. Andersen, *The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, JaLin (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 94-96. Behrens adopts it from there. Surprise clauses are not exclusive to the genre vision account but recur in various kinds of narratives, about 74 times in the OT.

²⁰³ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 222, under reference to Andersen, *Sentence*, 95.

Behrens finds five texts within the book of Ezekiel that comply with these criteria: 1:4-2:8; 2:9-3:9; 8:1-11:25; 37:1-14; and 43:1-9.²⁰⁴ He examines four of these in detail, but omits 43:1-9, because its insertion in the overall quasi-visionary context of Ezek 40-48 would require the analysis of a vaster amount of text material than Behrens can undertake in his volume.²⁰⁵

By applying Behrens's own criteria, I arrive at a slightly longer list of formal vision accounts in Ezekiel. I agree with him that there are, in the present text of 1:1-3:15, two vision accounts (1:4-2:8; 2:9-3:11)²⁰⁶ enclosed by a frame. Additionally, 3:22-26 simulates a vision without complying with Behrens's criteria; it will be discussed briefly. I further agree with Behrens regarding the vision-account composition 8:1-11:25 and regarding 37:1-14. With respect to Ezek 40-48, which contain a large amount of non-visionary material, I will need to limit my attention to the passages with formal vision properties. Whilst Behrens names only one such vision account within these chapters (43:1-9), I have found four. Firstly, the opening scene 40:1-4 has all the necessary features of a guidance vision, being composed of a visionary part (40:1-3, בוא *hiph.* substituting ראה) and a speech part (40:4, with וידבר instead of ויאמר). The second fully-fledged vision account is 43:1-12, which is recognized also by Behrens. The chapters in between these two visions (40-42) contain repeated elements of visionary parts (verbs of guidance, occasionally ויהי) but largely lack the speech components²⁰⁷; yet because Chapters 40-42 are framed by two complete vision accounts, they are altogether perceived as a vision. The redaction-critical analysis will include Ezek 40-42. The third vision account within

²⁰⁴ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 13. For his analyses see pp. 183-271.

²⁰⁵ The necessary "detaillierte Exegese würde den Rahmen der vorliegenden Arbeit sprengen" (*ibid.*, 76 note 1).

²⁰⁶ Contrary to Behrens, I assign 3:10-11, which contain direct speech, to the speech part of the second vision, not to the frame.

²⁰⁷ With the exception of 41:4 (refer to 5.4.3.3).

Ezek 40-48 has only two verses: 44:4-5.²⁰⁸ The visionary part (44:4) consists of a guidance note and *surprise clause*; the speech part (44:5) is introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר and begins with imperatives. Lastly, the famous passage about the healing river (47:1-12) is also clearly a vision account or, to be more precise, an arrangement of two vision accounts: 47:1-5 is a twofold visionary part (twice a movement verb is followed by וַיִּהְיֶה + participle clause), the speech part 47:6ab is made of just one question (introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר); the second visionary part 47:6c-7a is equally short (movement verb, וַיִּהְיֶה, verbless clause) whereas the speech part 47:8-12 is longer (again introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר). Since this vision presupposes the closure of the east gate, also 44:1-2, which also contains elements of a guidance vision, will be included in the research.

In summary, the present thesis is concerned with these texts: 1:1-3:15 (+ 3:22-26); 8:1-11:25; 37:1-14; 40:1-43:12; 44:1-2, 4-5; 47:1-12.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 A Diachronic Approach

Overall, the present thesis decidedly favours a diachronic approach; for the most part, though not exclusively, it employs historical-critical methodology, in particular redaction criticism.²⁰⁹

In recent times, source and redaction criticism have come under attack from scholars who prefer a synchronic or “holistic” approach to Old Testament texts.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Ezek 44:1-3, 4-5 are recognized as “two vision narratives” also by Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 251.

²⁰⁹ The term *redaction criticism* is used here in the sense of both *Literarkritik* and *Redaktionsgeschichte*. The former method often goes by *source criticism* in English; but since in Ezekiel the analysis is a matter of redactional layers, not sources, I prefer to avoid this nomenclature.

²¹⁰ Most prominently, Greenberg, “Vision of Jerusalem,” 144-148; *Ezekiel 1-20*, 20f; “Valid Criteria,” 123-135. Harsh criticism is also voiced e.g. by Edgar W. Conrad, *Reading the Latter Prophets: Toward a New Canonical Criticism*, JSOTSup 376 (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 25, “When historical-critical scholars concentrate on the history and development of the text, they are not

There are two frequent points of criticism. Firstly, there is the hypothetical nature of redaction-critical theories, “built on assumed though untested premises, ... with conclusions that are unverified and unverifiable”.²¹¹ In many instances, in fact, a vast quantity of contradictory ideas has been published, often with no consensus in sight. While this reflects a true problem of the redaction-critical method, it should challenge critics to choose their criteria carefully and to strive for sound argumentation – but it is not a reason to abandon this method. The second allegation on the part of synchronically working scholars in this debate is that a diachronic reading, which fragments the text into multiple sources, layers and glosses, does not take seriously, or “respect,” the final biblical writing as we have it. Kalinda Stevenson uses an expressive image to make this point:

Crazy-quilts are intentionally produced by stitching together different scraps of cloth, with the intention of producing a quilt. To reverse the process by taking the quilt apart to separate out the scraps would result in a pile of scraps and no more quilt – an engaging pastime, but not much comfort on a cold night. For the text of Ezekiel 40-48, the issue is not that someone pieced together scraps, but that someone wanted a quilt.²¹²

This contains some truth, as well as a warning against an excessive dissection for its own sake, and a reminder of the value of what is not “authentic material.” What becomes problematic, however, is when the choice of one approach turns into a quasi-dogmatic stance and demeans the other *a priori*. Generally speaking, both diachronic and synchronic approaches can lead to valuable insights or violate the text; this depends on how the chosen methodology is applied, on the sensitivity and

reading the text or interpreting it. They are using the text ‘to get something from it.’ They beat the text into shape to use it for their own agenda. ... Indeed, by constructing underlying sources, oral settings, redactional stages and a history of tradition, they are engaged in creating new texts ... to which they assign all sorts of intentions. ... These intentions surely can have nothing to do with the *intentio operis*”. (Seeing Conrad’s own, fairly superficial, interpretation of Ezekiel [pp. 161-181], I wonder whether his canonical reading is not equally accountable for such text mistreatments.)

²¹¹ Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, BiLitS 9 (Sheffield: Almond, 1983), 112.

²¹² Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 7. Similarly, Adele Berlin affirms, “The whole thrust of source criticism is toward the fragmenting of the narrative into sources, while, at the same time it ignores the rhetorical and poetic features which bind the narrative together.” *Poetics*, 121.

skill of the exegete, and finally on the text itself. None of the two approaches is per se superior to the other: they ask different questions. Returning to Stevenson's quilt image, I would see my work in defining the scraps (which are really not *scraps* but more often than not works of art), describing their quality, material, size, shape and colour, and attempting to understand the order and the technique by which they have been stitched together. I do not doubt the functionality of a quilt; I am simply more interested in the nature and value of its *pieces*, and in *how the quilt was made* out of them.

Whether or not redaction-critical methods are appropriate for analysing a given text unit can, and should, in my opinion, be dictated by the text itself. Reading a text respectfully means to take seriously all of its features, to get more and more familiar with its every aspect, and thus to establish a kind of dialogue with it. Just as the presence of certain form elements reveals the text's genre, the presence of open contradictions and tensions speaks about the text's history.

Ideally, I the interpreter, can only find out as much as the text is ready to disclose to me, which will depend both on my ability to "listen" to it and on the characteristics of the text.²¹³

In the case of Ezekiel,

we have to do justice to two things. The book of Ezekiel has its integrity as a work of literature read synchronically, and an approach to the book which fails to do justice to this and to learn from the wealth of recent studies of this kind would be sadly impoverished. And yet we must also take seriously the evidence of redactional activity which is to be discerned within the book of Ezekiel. The diachronic task is difficult but that does not mean that it is impossible, or that it is invalid.²¹⁴

²¹³ There are biblical books, for example Ruth, which do not disclose much, if anything, about their history. The book might indeed have one author only. A synchronic reading is in such cases very appropriate. Other texts, such as Luke's *Acts of the Apostles* in the NT, show signs of redaction but as the redactor(s) was/were skilled enough to cover their tracks, the text will not "speak" about it.

²¹⁴ Paul M. Joyce, "Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives on Ezekiel," in *Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis; Papers Read at the Ninth Joint*

Especially in the three largest vision accounts in Ezekiel (1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48), the tensions and contradictions are so evident and severe that a diachronic analysis – understanding their formation history through redaction criticism – will be a helpful, indeed necessary, tool for an appropriate interpretation. However, at various points along the way, methods traditionally used in a synchronic approach, like the analysis of structure and of literary features as well as aspects of narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism, will facilitate a better understanding of the “original fabric” and of intermediate stages in the process of “quilt-making.”

1.4.2 Redaction History

The ultimate purpose is to establish the redaction history of all the vision accounts (1:1-3:15 + 3:22-27; 8:1-11:25; 37:1-14; and the relevant parts of 40-48) as they interact with each other. A first step towards this is to analyse the above listed texts separately. This will mean applying a set of three methods to each: 1) textual criticism, at least with regard to the most significant variants; 2) redaction criticism, endeavouring to reconstruct the oldest, “original” version of every account, and to outline a redaction history; 3) structural-literary analysis of every major stage in this redaction history. Only then can the single results be combined into an overall redaction history, with the aim of mapping out the diachronic interrelationship of all vision accounts throughout the process of their redaction.

1.4.2.1 Textual Criticism and Verse Subdivision

In the course of this thesis, a full discussion of all textual issues is not possible. I will discuss textual-critical issues only where these are in some way relevant for the interpretation or for redaction-critical considerations, or where I see the need to

Meeting of Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België and the Society for Old Testament Study, Kampen 1994, ed. Johannes C. de Moor, OtSt 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 125.

amend the MT. Variations considered are mainly those of LXX manuscripts. Despite a certain tendency in the literature to correct the Hebrew text on the basis of LXX,²¹⁵ I will be inclined, in uncertain or equal-value cases, to give priority to the MT over the LXX. The text that will be at the basis of the subsequent investigations can be found in the Appendix. Less important textual divergences appear there in footnotes; emendations and textually insecure parts are evidenced through brackets.²¹⁶ Next to the Hebrew text, an English translation is given, which is based on the NRSV but adapted by me so as to be more literal and reflect more accurately the Hebrew word order.

In order to achieve a greater precision in quoting the text, the verses have been subdivided according to the syntax-based method by Wolfgang Richter.²¹⁷ Each grammatically complete clause is on a separate line; the lines are numbered by lowercase letters (1a, 1b, 1c...). Direct speech is additionally visualized through indentation. Of Richter's many exceptions, I have adopted only two: in case of *casus pendens* ahead of a clause (for example 9:10 לְאִתְּהוֹם עֵינַי / וְגַם־אֵינִי – As for me / my eye will not spare), the *casus pendens* is assigned the same letter as the following clause but with an additional subscribed “P” (9:10ap: וְגַם־אֵינִי, 10a: לְאִתְּהוֹם עֵינַי). Second, if a sentence is interrupted by parenthesis, the two fractions of the interrupted sentence are marked x₁ and x₂; (for example 40:20a₁ וְהִשְׁעָר / 20b פָּנָיו אֲשֶׁר

²¹⁵ For a summary of the debate on the general priority of MT or LXX in Ezekiel, see Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 44-49. For a compact research history of textual studies on Ezekiel in general, see Johan Lust, “The Use of Textual Witnesses for the Establishment of the Text: The Shorter and Longer Texts of Ezekiel,” in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 7-12.

²¹⁶ That is, () indicate the omission by LXX and/or other significant versions; < > signify an emendation of the MT; and [] mark small-scale glosses in terms of redaction criticism.

²¹⁷ Wolfgang Richter, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft: Entwurf einer alttestamentlichen Literaturtheorie und Methodologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 83f. Specifically for the book of Ezekiel, see Wolfgang Richter, *Biblia Hebraica transcripta: BH^t; das ist das ganze Alte Testament transkribiert, mit Satzeinteilungen versehen und durch die Version tiberisch-masoretischer Autoritäten bereichert, auf der sie gründet*, vol. 9. Ezekiel, ATSAT 33 (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1993).

לְהַצִּיר הַחַיְצוֹנָה 20a₂ / דָּרָה הַצִּפּוֹן – And the gate / that faced toward the north / [belonged] to the outer court).

1.4.2.2 Redaction Criticism

The distinction between original and redactional material in Ezekiel is notoriously difficult.²¹⁸ Therefore, and aware of the ultimately hypothetical character of a redaction-critical analysis, as a rule, more than one factor needs to suggest that a section or phrase derives from a different author before redaction is assumed. The following factors will be accepted as tell-tale signs for redaction in a given passage: logical contradictions, substantial shifts in style and language (grammar and/or vocabulary), mutually excluding concepts expressed by the same term, interruption of a thought or action by another (where this does not have a narrative function), excessive structural imbalance, change of genre in the middle of a text unit, sudden shifts in addressees and/or main concern. The observations and opinions of prior scholarly work are also considered as indications but need to be critically scrutinised case by case. I will avoid arguing from aesthetic factors or (modern) reader expectations as these aspects bear too much risk of subjectivity and anachronism to be valid criteria. Also with regard to repetitions and so-called doublets caution is needed, bearing in mind that repetitiousness as such is an integral and authentic part of the Ezekielian style.²¹⁹

Through the redaction-critical analysis I hope to arrive at the “original vision account,” as distinct from redactional layers, revisions, and glosses. Where possible,

²¹⁸ “The nature of the book is such that it is particularly resistant to any straightforward division between primary and secondary material. This is surely not because the whole book is from the prophet Ezekiel ... but rather because of the marked homogeneity of the Ezekiel tradition, in which secondary material bears an unusual close ‘family resemblance’ to primary.” Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 12.

²¹⁹ Though not in every detail, I will be operating in the style of Richter, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft*, 49-72.

the redactions will be ordered chronologically so as to trace the history of the respective account's formation.

1.4.2.3 Structural Analysis

This method is concerned with the structure and with the literary features of the original account as well as of the major stages in the text's growth. Not all redactions will be taken into consideration but only those that significantly alter the account's structure.

The decision about an account's subdivision in various parts and sections will not depend primarily on content arguments but will rather be based on formal criteria, such as syntax, interruption of pronominal back-references, shifting from narration to direct speech or vice-versa, changes in location, time, or agents, and the use of formulae, refrains and *inclusiones*.²²⁰ In particular, the genre-typical configuration of visionary part and speech part already offers a template for the overall structure.

While describing each section of the respective text, further stylistic devices will be surveyed as appropriate: for example the occurrence of theme words and semantic fields; the sequence of tenses (simultaneity or consecutiveness of actions); characteristic repetitions; the use of wordplays, parallelisms and other embellishments. Also the links between sections will be considered.

These observations will facilitate an appropriate understanding of the (original or redacted) account and its central interests, and thereby enable, I hope, the recognition of the authorial/redactional intent. The analysis will therefore conclude

²²⁰ This corresponds to a simplified version of Richter's *Kritik der äußeren Form*. See *ibid.*, 79-92. On the methodical need for formal criteria, see *ibid.*, 77f.

with a brief summary on the principal meaning(s) of the vision account throughout its redaction history.

1.4.2.4 Interrelated Redaction History

On this basis, the redaction histories of the single vision accounts can then be examined with respect to their relative chronology and interrelationship.²²¹ The original accounts will be questioned as to the plausibility of their being authored by “Ezekiel”, i.e. an early sixth-century writer who was part of the first group of deportees to Babylonia. Given that the three largest vision accounts carry dates this will be the moment to discuss their credibility and significance.²²² Likewise, in relation to all redaction layers it will be asked whether indications are available as to when they were most likely to have originated (absolute dating).

In addition I will examine the extent and direction of dependences and influences from one layer to another. Once dependence is identified, there might be indications for its direction, such as: one passage presupposes the other in any way; one text is more consistent in its plot, its terminology, or in the function of the repeated elements; text-immanent reasons are recognizable in the shorter/longer version for omitting/adding certain elements.

I expect that along the way differences and similarities in the redactional techniques will also emerge more clearly. For example, a redactor may have literally copied verses *en bloc*, or created a new text by taking up key elements from other passages; he may have generated connections through allusions or through explicit references to other texts. This understanding will assist in grouping the redaction

²²¹ Richter treats this step rather briefly (*ibid.*, 172f.).

²²² For the transferral of the Ezekielian dates into the modern counting of months and years, I base myself on Ernst Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten des Ezechielbuches*, OBO 62 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985).

layers and in determining whether one redactor might be responsible for multiple layers.

It is hoped that the result will be a complete outline of the redaction history of all vision accounts in Ezekiel.

1.4.3 Theology

Yet redaction criticism by itself and for its own sake is not enough.²²³ The knowledge about the redaction history of the vision accounts is valuable in as much as it helps to understand them better. For this reason the thesis continues by implementing an interpretation that is mindful of the text's diachronic development. This part will inquire about the *theology* of Ezekiel's vision accounts.

The theoretical possibility of such an endeavour has been affirmed for example by Adele Berlin:

But there *is* diachronic poetics. Just as one is able to write a historical grammar, showing grammatical changes over a period of time, so one ought to be able to write a historical poetics, showing the changes in structure and discourse that a text may undergo.²²⁴

Whereas Berlin doubted that this can be done in practice,²²⁵ I believe that a narrative-rhetorical examination of a reconstructed text can indeed be carried out; in fact, only with the proviso that such an analysis is possible and yields acceptable results, the reconstruction may claim some degree of plausibility.

My method will be to follow theological themes from their first appearance in the "original" vision accounts all through their development in selected redactional

²²³ For, as Höffken, "Beobachtungen," 309 correctly remarks, "sind literarkritische Operationen eigentlich nur sinnvoll, wenn sie bestimmte Gesichtspunkte in der Interpretation von Texten fördern, also sich auf diese Weise 'bewähren.'"

²²⁴ Berlin, *Poetics*, 111 (her italics). Likewise, Fox recognized the possibility of combining diachronic approach and rhetorical criticism; affirming he sees in principle "no reason to restrict it [i.e. rhetorical criticism] to criticism of the 'received text.'" Michael V. Fox, "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones," *HUCA* 51 (1980): 1 note 1.

²²⁵ Berlin, *Poetics*, 112.

stages. In order to initiate a dialogue with the texts and to arrive at theological ideas contained within them, I will ask of the texts the same sort of questions that typically are asked by narrative critics²²⁶ and rhetorical critics:²²⁷ From whose psychological and/or ideological point of view is the story narrated? Whose ideological point of view is the audience invited to adopt? How are the characters portrayed? Is there a dominant character? With which character is the audience meant to empathize, and what might be the designed effect of this, if we assume an exilic readership? What is the narrative and theological function of the intermediary men and creatures in some of the vision accounts,²²⁸ and are they related to each other? Of particular interest is the portrayal of the relationship between YHWH and the House of Israel because it is expected that theological themes may be developed especially against the background of the divine-human relationship.

Once an idea has been established from the “original” accounts, it can then be sought out in the most pertinent redactional layers. The way it is present (or absent) there can be compared with the earlier occurrence, so that a development, for example of how YHWH is portrayed, becomes apparent.

Essentially, my exercise in “diachronic poetics” has a twofold aspiration: on the one hand, it may support the results of redaction criticism; on the other hand, I

²²⁶ My main references for narrative-critical methods are *ibid.*, 33-82; and Gary Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative: Point of View in Biblical Exegesis* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 152-187. Furthermore Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, GBS New Testament Series (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) and David Gunn, “Narrative Criticism,” in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 201-229.

²²⁷ I refer in particular to the set of rhetorical-critical methods composed by Phyllis Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah*, GBS Old Testament Series (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 101-106 and its more concise adaptation by Dennis T. Olson, “Literary and Rhetorical Criticism,” in *Methods for Exodus*, ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Methods in Biblical Interpretation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23f. As a matter of fact, the methods of narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism practically overlap in many regards, distinguished only by their specific focus of interest.

²²⁸ For example, the six executioners and the man dressed in linen in 9:1-10:7, the guide with the measuring rod in 40:3-43:6 and 47:1-12, the four living beings in 1:5-26, the cherubim in 10:1-22.

hope to demonstrate that an interpretation with diachronic dimension contains additional depth and a more solid groundwork.

1.5 Thesis Outline

In accordance with the two different methodologies employed, this thesis will consist of two parts. The first, and major, part (Chapters 2-6) is dedicated to establishing the redaction history of the vision accounts in Ezekiel; the second part (Chapters 7-9) is concerned with their theology.

Chapters 2-5 will each analyse one of the four vision accounts diachronically. Thus Chapter 2 will examine Ezekiel's call 1:1-3:15 (+22-26); Chapter 3 the first temple vision Ezek 8-11; Chapter 4 the vision of the bones 37:1-14; and Chapter 5 the relevant pieces of the second temple vision 40-48. As set out above, the diachronic analysis will entail textual criticism, redaction criticism and structural analysis; the outlines of Chapters 2-5 will be according to these methodical steps. Every chapter will conclude with a statement on the probable intention of each stage of the respective account's redaction history.

Chapter 6 will unite the redaction-critical results of the previous chapters and address the question of how the vision accounts relate to each other all along the period of their formation. This will involve issues of date, authorship, inter-textual connections and literary dependence, which will be discussed layer by layer.

With Chapter 7 we will enter the second part of the thesis. As a first route to gain a deeper understanding of the vision accounts' theological ideas, Chapter 7 will offer an analysis of the "original vision accounts" according to the questions arising from narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism as outlined above. By examining the use of point of view, the portrayal of the main characters, and the designed effect on the audience, the inner dynamics of the accounts and their (theological) intentions

will emerge with greater clarity. The chapter will also follow up these dynamics in some redactional layers where this seems most profitable.

Chapter 8 will continue on a similar note, as its focus will be specifically on the relationship between YHWH and the House of Israel as displayed in the “original vision accounts” and in pertinent redactions. Deriving from this key relationship, more general theological and anthropological themes will be explored as well.

Chapter 9 will map out the development in the visions regarding the presence and function of the various original and redactional intermediary characters that are neither human nor divine. It will undertake a survey of these figures in chronological order. In particular, the survey will compare their description, their function for the story, and their relation to YHWH.

Finally, Chapter 10 will contain a general conclusion and suggestions for future studies.

PART I: The Interconnected Redaction History of Ezekiel’s Vision Accounts

2. Ezekiel 1:1-3:15

Ezek 1:1-3:15 is the first literary unit in the book of Ezekiel. The change of place in 3:12-15 indicates the end of the unit.¹ Ezek 3:15c clearly concludes it by introducing a change in date (“for seven days”), which will be taken up in 3:16 as the beginning of a new sequence (אֵתֶּן + relative date: “And at the end of the seven days...”).

¹ Accurately observed by Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 14. Contra the proposal that Ezek 1:1-5:17 form one single unit about the “initiation” of the prophet, by Odell, “You Are What You Eat,” 229-234.

2.1 Textual Criticism

2.1.1 General Remarks

The text of the first chapter of Ezekiel is not well preserved; indeed, it is one of the worst preserved texts in the book,² as well as in the Old Testament in general. This means a great number of divergences exist between the Masoretic Text (MT), the Septuagint (LXX), and other textual witnesses such as the Targum (T), the Peshitta (S), the Vulgate (V), and, for some parts, texts from Qumran (Q). In the MT, the confusing difficulties in language, grammar and content are striking, while the Greek text tends to offer a shorter and more intelligible reading. As a rule, the MT represents the *lectio difficilior* and, although it certainly has suffered corruption in multiple instances, may therefore be regarded as the more original version. It is more plausible that later translations or editions delete prior grammatical errors or modify a difficult passage than the reverse way round. However, opinions about this vary. There has been a certain tendency to correct the Hebrew text on the basis of LXX.³ The underlying presumption (also for redaction criticism) is that the text in its original state must have been free from grammatical errors and redundancies, and easier to visualize. But can we suppose that?⁴ The numerous textual variants warn us to be very careful, in the case of Ezek 1, to presume an original writing without difficulties or tensions.⁵ Rather, it is quite likely that this chapter has always been a

² “A quick scan of *BHS* reveals that only chap. 41 has elicited more textual notes than chap. 1.” Block, “Text and Emotion,” 419.

³ Representatives for this approach are e.g. John W. Wevers and Johan Lust; the same tendency, though not extreme, is present in the commentary by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*.

⁴ For a general criticism on this assumption, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 20f; Lieb, *Visionary Mode*, 18-21 (esp. 21).

⁵ “Schon die zahlreichen textkritischen Probleme, die die Rekonstruktion eines sinnvolle [sic] Textes in Ezek 1 teilweise sehr erschweren, sind ein Indiz dafür, daß die Verständnisschwierigkeiten gegenüber diesem sperrigen Text schon sehr alt sind.” Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 74 note 41. Hals, *Ezekiel*, 15 summarily supposes “a complex textual and literary history, doubtless resulting in part from the complexities of the content.”

challenge on all levels. Exactly because of that, later generations in their struggle for understanding and re-interpreting would certainly have left their “pen-prints” in it.⁶

Nonetheless, not always does the MT offer the preferable text. Assuming this, would mean falling into the opposite extreme. For example, the argument proposed by Daniel Block,⁷ that especially the text of Ezek 1 must have been chaotic from its origin, since this directly reflects the awesomeness of the experience it tries to communicate, fails to recognize the distance between writing about an event and the event itself.⁸ More importantly,

no pre-Hellenistic epigraphical document ... is so full of grammatical, syntactical and semantic difficulties as the Masoretic text of Ez. 1. On historical and empirical grounds, to attribute the text as it stands in its entirety to the exilic prophet-priest is inherently implausible.⁹

Even Moshe Greenberg who usually defends the MT, has to admit, in several instances, that it cannot coincide with the original text.¹⁰

The exegetical analyses of the present thesis will generally be based on the MT as reference text, except where the evidence points clearly to its corruption. Where the readings of LXX and MT are equally reasonable and the decision either way does not influence the interpretation significantly, I will retain the MT and indicate the textually uncertain status of these words or phrases by round brackets.¹¹ Necessary

⁶ For a fuller textual discussion of Ezek 1:1-3:15, see G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936; repr., 1960), xl-xlvii, 3-43; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1-13; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 2-13; Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1-24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 79-138.

⁷ Block, “Text and Emotion,” 427-439.

⁸ As already Fohrer realized, “erzählt er [i.e. Ezekiel] seine Erlebnisse nicht unmittelbar, sondern überliefert sie in der ausführlichen Darstellung späterer Berichte.” Georg Fohrer and Kurt Galling, *Ezekiel*, HAT 13 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1955), 7f. (cf. Chap. 1.2.7 note 200).

⁹ Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, “Ezekiel 1,” 146. Also Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, V remarks, “Wenn man den ganzen Text [i.e. Ezek 1] einem einzigen Verfasser, dem Propheten, zuschreibt, ist es nicht zu verwundern, wenn jemand sich die Frage stellt, ob ein Mann, der in dieser Weise schreibt, noch normal genannt werden könne.”

¹⁰ Compare some of his textual notes in Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 45-47.

¹¹ In most such indifferent instances, the divergence consists in LXX not representing small verse parts present in MT. The probably best-known example for this is the rendition of the sacred name in LXX. The representation of the typical appellative יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ in Ezekiel MT (217 times) varies in

emendations of the Hebrew are marked by < > and the MT reading is given in footnote. The resulting text is accessible in Appendix A.

2.1.2 Textual-Critical Emendations of the MT in Ezek 1

In Ezek 1, there are a number of instances where the MT has to be corrected with the help of LXX and/or other ancient versions.

The first instance occurs in 1:3b. While the use of the third person singular masculine in 1:3a will be discussed in terms of redaction criticism later on, in the second half of the verse (1:3b), the MT continues the use of third person by reading עָלָיו, “upon him.” However, LXX and S render the first person singular ἐπ’ ἐμὲ, “upon me.” The decision will have consequences for assigning, in terms of redaction criticism, 1:3b either to the gloss 1:3a (with MT) or to 1:4 (with LXX, S). Since a very similar phrase, with first-person-singular suffix, reappears at the beginning of the first temple vision in 8:1,¹² together with other elements of 1:1-4 (for example a date, the terms רֹחַ and מְרִאוֹת אֱלֹהִים), the reading of LXX seems to be more plausible. Hence 1:3b belongs to 1:1, 4-28.¹³

Verse 1:13 LXX begins καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ζώων, whereas the first words in MT are וְדַמּוֹת הַחַיּוֹת. This difference is usually explained as a scribal error in MT, turning an original וּבִינֹת (as in 10:6f) or וּמְתוֹךְ (as in 1:4f)¹⁴ into וְדַמּוֹת, which “might easily have occurred when the text was written in archaic characters.”¹⁵ If this is the case,

LXX manuscripts (G^A, G^B, Q, P⁹⁶⁷), but often it is rendered by a simple κύριος (for details, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1253-1258).

¹² 8:1d: וְתַפְּלַל עָלַי שֵׁם יְדֵי אֲדָנָי יְהוָה.

¹³ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 6; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 4, 22; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 4; Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 2 note 3b; and Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 4. If one were to follow the MT here, 1:3b would, as a consequence, belong to the insertion 1:3a.

¹⁴ As suggested by Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 8; Allen, “Structure and Intention,” 147; and Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 6.

¹⁵ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 25; see also Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 5; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 46.

LXX preserves the original reading. Consequently, the suffix of מראה needs also to be excluded.¹⁶

LXX omits the entire verse 1:14. Although 1:14 is witnessed by the Vulgate and the Targum, most commentators take it to be a gloss, a variation of elements of the preceding verse.¹⁷ The dashing movement of the living creatures seems indeed to stand in contrast to their preceding description.

In 1:15ab, MT adds וְהָיָה between וְאָרָא and וְהָיָה but these two words are usually not separated since they function as marker for the genre vision account.¹⁸ The LXX version, without the reference to the living beings, is therefore preferable.

Verse 1:18ab offers such great difficulties that Eichrodt resignedly states, “The first four words are untranslatable.”¹⁹ The MT וְהָיָה לְהֵם וְיָרְאָה לְהֵם employs the root ירא (either as noun or infinitive absolute). At first the sentence structure looks like a parallelism; yet the phrase does not seem to make sense. For instance, as a noun, ירא occurs nowhere else in combination with ל, and it always refers to a subject *experiencing* fear, never to one *provoking* it.²⁰ LXX and S take the root to be ראה instead, thus LXX reads καὶ εἶδον, “and I saw”, while S has the plural “and they were seeing.” This led commentators to conjecture וְאָרָא לְהֵם or a similar reading.²¹ However, even this solution is not without problems, for וְאָרָא (usually + וְהָיָה) normally marks the beginning of a new section in this vision. This is impossible here, as the apparition of the wheels has only just been introduced by these words in 1:15.

¹⁶ This is, however, not supported by 4Q Ezek b which is almost identical to the MT. Lust, “Ezekiel Manuscripts in Qumran,” 95.

¹⁷ For example, Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, trans. Cosslett Quin, OTL (London: SCM, 1970), 50; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 5f; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 46; Block, “Text and Emotion,” 423.

¹⁸ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60. In reference to 1:15, see p. 188 note 14.

¹⁹ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 50.

²⁰ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 7 however considers “such an extension of meaning feasible” and pleads for the MT, “if only for lack of a convincing alternative.” Also Nahum M. Waldman, “A Note on Ezekiel 1:18,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 614-618 decides for the MT but translates, “As for their rims – these having majesty and fearfulness – their rims were filled with eyes all around, all four of them” (p. 617).

²¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 7; also Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 18, 26.

The use of a *wayyiqtol*-form, which is rare in Ezek 1, would moreover put a much greater emphasis on a mere detail of the wheels than it seems appropriate. Besides, there is no parallel for ראה + ל with the meaning of *to look at something*. As a result, the original text cannot be reconstructed in this case. We only know that there must have been some form of the root ראה or the root ירא, probably in the sense of either *I looked at them* or *I feared them / they were terrifying*, which both fit the context.

The MT of 1:23bc is exceptionally repetitive: וּלְאִישׁ שְׁתִּימִם מִכַּסּוֹת לְהִנָּה / וּלְאִישׁ שְׁתִּימִם מִכַּסּוֹת לְהִנָּה אֵת גְּוִיֹתֵיהֶם. Although confirmed by Q,²² the redundant phrasing is reasonably explained as dittography. The shorter reading in LXX and in some Hebrew manuscripts, which leaves out the second מִכַּסּוֹת לְהִנָּה, is preferred here.

Moreover, 1:25 MT mostly repeats elements of either the verse before (v. 24b: וּמִמַּעַל לָרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ) or the verse after (v. 26ab: בְּעֶמְדָם תִּרְפִּינָה כְנָפֵיהֶן). The entire v. 25 is omitted by several manuscripts of S. Some commentators therefore consider v. 25 as a gloss.²³ More selective, LXX does not translate the repeated parts (1:25c, 26ab). Greenberg defends the MT as original, with the shorter text in LXX being a case of *aberratio oculi* from 25b to 26b.²⁴ I agree with him regarding the MT for 1:25ab; whereas for 1:25c, which is lacking even in some medieval Hebrew manuscripts, it is probably LXX that preserves the original.

In 1:27a, LXX does not account for MT כְּמִרְאֵה-אֵשׁ בֵּית-לָהּ סָבִיב after כְּעֵין חֹשֶׁמֶל. Although Greenberg illustrates a complicated parallelism he finds in the MT, LXX's

²² On 4Q Ezek b, see Lust, "Ezekiel Manuscripts in Qumran," 95f.

²³ For example, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 8; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 51. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 20 follows LXX's reading in 1:25 but he also excludes the mentioning of the "voice" as secondary, so that only the conjectured וְהִנָּה remains. The excision of קוֹל in 1:25a however goes unnecessarily beyond textual criticism and forces to supposing ample redaction also in the subsequent verses, which become unintelligible without it.

²⁴ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 49f; also van Dyke Parunak, "Structural Studies," 127.

lectio brevior seems more likely (and is followed by the majority).²⁵ It seems more appropriate that 1:27c should refer, as in 1:4d, to the whole appearance and not only, as Greenberg has it, to the lower part of the manlike figure.

2.1.3 Textual-Critical Emendations of the MT in Ezek 2:1-3:15

This part offers far less textual difficulties. Only three verses need discussion.

The first case regards 2:3b. Besides LXX, also T and V write “House of Israel,” a characteristic expression in Ezekiel. Conversely, MT has *בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* which is more common elsewhere. Cooke suggests that the change occurred because “the Hebr. text which lay before the Gk. translators used the abbreviation *ב' ישראל*.”²⁶ However, it is assumed that “House of Israel” (with LXX, T, and V) is the original phrase.

Moreover, MT adds *אֶל-גּוֹיִם* before *הַמְּוֹרְדִים*. Since everywhere else in this narrative Ezekiel is sent explicitly to Israel and not to foreign peoples (3:5-6), *אֶל-גּוֹיִם* is most likely a gloss.²⁷

The MT reading of 3:6a is: *לֹא אֶל-עַמִּים רַבִּים עָמְקֵי שָׁפָה וְכַבְדֵּי לְשׁוֹן*, repeating *עָמְקֵי שָׁפָה וְכַבְדֵּי לְשׁוֹן* from the verse before. S omits this repetition. LXX seems to be even more reworked and is therefore of little help for the reconstruction. Most commentators assume dittography and follow the shorter reading of S.²⁸

In 3:12, MT and all ancient versions read *כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ* but, despite the unanimity, this doxology seems strangely out of place. In the 1870's Hitzig and Luzzatto independently suggested conjecturing *ברום* instead of *ברך*, as *רום* is used

²⁵ For example by Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 51; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 8; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 49; and Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 9f.

²⁶ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 36.

²⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 9.

²⁸ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 39; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 60; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 54; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 11f.

with כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה as subject in Ezek 10. This proposal soon became scholarly consensus and is reflected also in NRSV.²⁹

2.2 Redaction Criticism of Ezek 1:1-3:15

2.2.1 Glosses

The present form of Ezek 1:1-3:15 shows on the one hand signs of an intentional arrangement that is enclosed by a frame (1:1-3; 3:12-15) and meant to be read as a unity. On the other hand, textual criticism has already illustrated that Ezek 1:1-3:15 was edited and modified in multiple instances. This is not limited to those additions and alterations that can be traced with the help of ancient text versions. Various kinds of tensions indicate that Ezek 1:1-3:15 was written by more than one author.

While the next section will be dedicated to the identification of different editorial layers, some quantitatively smaller glosses (less than five verses), which cannot be assigned to any particular redaction, shall be briefly discussed here. In some cases, they are linked to textual-critical questions, which makes their discussion at this point, rather than later, more appropriate. In the Appendix, these glosses are marked by []. This list is not exhaustive in the sense of excluding the possibility of a higher amount of secondary or tertiary material. Rather, it contains the most apparent glosses, which are recognized as such by the majority of those scholars who work with a diachronic approach.

²⁹ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 41; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 12; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 13; and especially Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 133-135; and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 70f. The latter however dissents with the majority by seeing an interpolation in 3:12c. Indeed, if one was to hold on to the MT for 3:12c, the enigmatic phrase would inevitably attract suspicions of being a gloss.

2.2.1.1 The Secondary Date in 1:2

The first of these glosses occurs at the very onset of the vision, in 1:2. Both 1:1 and 1:2 provide a date for the following vision account. While the discussion on the relation between both dates needs to be postponed to a later chapter,³⁰ it may be anticipated here that they are essentially in tension: 1:1 refers to the “thirtieth year” of an undefined era, while 1:2 seemingly adds this information (“that is the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin”) but while repeating the day, it leaves out any mentioning of a month. Formally, the date in 1:2 differs from all other dates in Ezekiel (beginning with the day, lacking a month). It repeats the last two words of 1:1a (בְּהַמִּשָּׁה לַחֲדָשׁ), then identifies the thereby evoked first date with the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s exile. The emphasized ...יָאֵר is equivalent to “i.e./that is” and recurs similarly in other harmonizing glosses.³¹ The redactor thus tried to synchronize the enigmatic thirtieth year with the fifth year of Jehoiachin’s exile. With the majority of commentators,³² 1:2 is seen as an explanatory harmonizing gloss that is dependent on 1:1.

2.2.1.2 The Redactional Title in 1:3a

Directly ensuing, 1:3a uses the third person singular masculine while 1:1 and the rest of Chapter 1 are written in a first-person-singular perspective. Many scholars therefore consider 1:3a as a gloss.³³ It gives, however, important information, such as the narrator’s name and the name of his father, as well as his (or their) profession,

³⁰ Refer to Chap. 6.3.1.

³¹ Compare for example 10:15, 20, 22.

³² For example Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 1; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 51; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41; Bruce Vawter and Leslie J. Hoppe, *A New Heart: A Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, ITC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 24. By contrast, Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 45-54 holds that 1:2* is the older date and was redactionally transformed into a synchronism when 1:1 was inserted. Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 389f. argues also for the priority of 1:2-3a, without taking into consideration the above discussed reasons.

³³ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 3; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 51; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 21-23; Hals, *Ezekiel*, 11 see in 1:3a an independent gloss, whereas Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 19 treats 1:2-3a as one insertion. Even Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 39 acknowledges redaction in these verses; however, he is “supposing the prophet to have been his own editor and the author of the explanation in vss. 2-3.”

and that the “exile” is to be located “in the land of the Chaldeans.” The use of the *word-event formula* shows the relation to editorial headings of other prophetic books, especially to Haggai and Zechariah, which suggests its insertion at a relatively late date. For some reason, probably because of the already existing dates in 1:1-2, this title has not been inserted at the very beginning of the book, but immediately after.³⁴

2.2.1.3 Glosses in 1:4, 1:13, and 1:23

In 1:4, the complicated sentence structure provokes doubts regarding the originality of the second half of this verse³⁵ because וְל in 1:4c refers grammatically to the masculine נֶפֶשׁ (4b) but the mentioning of fire (שָׁרָף, fem.) stands in between. Conversely, 4c interrupts the connection from שָׁרָף to מִתְהַוֶּה (4d). LXX modifies the order of elements accordingly: καὶ νεφέλη μεγάλη ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ φέγγος κύκλω αὐτοῦ καὶ πῦρ ἐξαστράπτων. In the light of the general confusion of grammatical gender in this chapter (see below), it is however questionable whether וְל refers to the cloud alone or perhaps to the whole apparition. Thus the structural awkwardness may be original. Nonetheless, the threefold repetition of מִתְהַוֶּה in 1:4d-5a suggests that מִתְהַוֶּה³⁶ or alternatively the first מִתְהַוֶּה of 1:4d, is probably a clarification, thought necessary by a scribe precisely because of the unclear sentence structure. Another redaction-critical argument, which is stressed particularly by Zimmerli,³⁷ is that 1:4 anticipates elements from 1:27. However, this does not yet prove its secondary character. On the contrary, the resumption of these elements is a deliberate structuring feature of Ezek 1:4-28.³⁸

³⁴ For example Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 19.

³⁵ For instance, Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 9; and Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 23 regard all of 4de as secondary; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 50 most of it; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41 only v. 4e.

³⁶ In the Vulgate, שָׁרָף מִתְהַוֶּה is translated by *id est medio ignis*, which underlines its “character of an additional comment.” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 83.

³⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 4, 23.

³⁸ So convincingly Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 188f. (especially note 19); refer to section 2.4.2.2 below.

In addition to the aforementioned disagreement of 1:13 MT with LXX, the sentence structure of this verse appears twisted and overloaded. Indeed, in 1:13c it is difficult to say what exactly *אִיִּךְ* is referring to; and the flashing movement among the living beings is never mentioned again. Besides, the repetition of the noun *אִיִּךְ* in 13c is both unnecessary and untypical since this term only just appeared in 1:13a, while its last occurrence was in 1:5a. Grammatically and with regard to its content, 1:13c can be taken out of its context without problems. It appears to be a secondary insertion.³⁹

The same appears to be true for the remainder of the above discussed 1:23bc. Even the shorter reading of LXX is a mere repetition of 1:11d, which is out of context here; it seems therefore that it was inserted by another hand.⁴⁰

2.2.1.4 The Gender Confusion in Ezek 1

At this point, a few words need to be said on one of the most puzzling features in 1:5-26: the arbitrary usage of feminine verbal forms and suffixes with masculine subjects and vice versa.⁴¹ Zimmerli uses the erroneous or correct use of gender as one of the main criteria for his redaction criticism in Ezek 1.⁴² Because elsewhere in the book the use of feminine and masculine forms is more consistent than it is in 1:5-26, he assumes the confusion must be the result of redaction. This criterion alone is however not compelling enough, for several reasons.

To begin with, in the case of the *אִיִּךְ*, the confusion is at least partly due to the conflict between grammatical and biological gender. Othmar Keel wonders if the

³⁹ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 15; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41 [also 13c]; Othmar Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen und Siegelkunst: Eine neue Deutung der Majestätsschilderungen in Jes 6, Ez 1 und 10 und Sach 4*, SBS 84-85 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1977), 143 [vv. 13-14]; and Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 27 who also holds "Bedenken gegenüber dem Rest 13aab."

⁴⁰ With Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 27; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 7f.

⁴¹ For a short but complete overview of the phenomenon, see Block, "Text and Emotion," 420f.

⁴² Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 24-30; also Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41f. and essentially Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 66-68.

“wild zwischen maskulin und feminin hin- und herhüpfenden Suffixe in Ez 1” could be a deliberate feature, expressing the bisexuality of the living creatures.⁴³ I would rather suppose the author (and/or scribe) imagined the תיִת as either male or asexual – as are most of their iconographic relatives – while grammatically however they are feminine. It appears only reasonable that, on the contrary, in Ezek 16 and 23 the use of feminine forms is regular because there it refers to not only *grammatically* but *biologically* female subjects. Mistakes occur much more easily where gender is only a matter of grammar, especially in a language like Hebrew where masculine forms prevail. Similarly, in the parallel text in Ezek 10, the confusion does not occur because there are no feminine subjects. Then again, in the vision of the valley of bones (37:1-14), gender irregularities occur once more, yet without being exploited by Zimmerli in terms of redaction criticism.⁴⁴

A second problem is that there are too many possible explanations for the phenomenon to be a reliable criterion for redaction criticism. Being oftentimes a question of changing one letter only, the interchange of masculine and feminine forms can for instance be due to scribal error,⁴⁵ perhaps provoked by the thought of the cherubim in Ezek 10 instead of the living creatures, or of the living creatures instead of the wheels. Moreover, in post-exilic and post-biblical Hebrew, the feminine third person plural suffix seems to disappear. The confusion in Ezekiel could thus reflect a transition state in this development.⁴⁶ To be sure, it is not likely that the incoherent use of gender in 1:5-26 is the original shape of the text; it is simply too ambiguous an observation to be employed as a decisive factor as to whether a portion of text is secondary or not. This is confirmed not least by

⁴³ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 215 note 203.

⁴⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 886f.; Appendix C note 2.

⁴⁵ Argued for example by Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 55f.

⁴⁶ See the linguistic study by Mark F. Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition: The Language of the Book of Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 90 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 78-81.

inconsistencies in Zimmerli's own reconstruction attempt.⁴⁷ When abandoning this criterion, most of Zimmerli's redaction criticism in 1:5-26 becomes obsolete.⁴⁸

2.2.1.5 Glosses in Ezek 2-3

In comparison to Ezek 1, within 2:1-3:15 there is much less reason to assume editorial activity. The text is less difficult and seems to have undergone a less troubled development. There are only three instances that need to be discussed.

The first concerns the last three words of 3:5 (אֶל־בַּיִת יִשְׁרָאֵל). Although represented in all major textual witnesses, these are considered as secondary by the majority of commentators⁴⁹ and seem indeed attached in a not very elegant way.

Another redactional insertion can be found in 3:13. The repetition of the last three words of 3:12b (קוֹל רַעַשׁ גְּדוֹל) at the end of 3:13 is redundant and formally marks an addition, according to the *Prinzip der Wiederaufnahme*. Therefore, 3:13 is of a later date than its immediate context. Vogt sees a second doublet in 3:12a/14a and takes it as a sign that the two verses 3:12-13 are secondary.⁵⁰ However, 3:12a is formulated with *wayyiqtol* in the foreground, while 3:14a refers back to it in an *x-qatal* background clause. Hence this repetition is not a clear evidence for redaction. The secondary addition could include 3:12c; it is however possible, with Lang,⁵¹ to assign 3:12c (in its conjectured form) with 3:12ab, as it explains the noise mentioned in 3:12b. It follows that the insertion most likely comprises 3:13 only, as the majority

⁴⁷ For instance, he refers only to suffixes, while the confusion involves also verbal forms and nouns. For criticism of Zimmerli in this regard, see Houk, "Final Redaction," 46; Block, "Text and Emotion," 427.

⁴⁸ This is not to exclude the possibility of redaction. However, there is no valid redaction-critical criterion available.

⁴⁹ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 39; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 11 note 5b; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 53; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 60; Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 28. On the contrary, see Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 127 note 81.

⁵⁰ Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 15-17. He sees in 3:12-14a a different understanding of the Glory, closer to chap. 10 than to chap. 1. His argumentation depends on 1:23-25 being editorial too and is not entirely convincing.

⁵¹ Lang, "Erste und letzte Vision," 228.

of scholars assume.⁵² Notably, 3:13 is also the only instance in Ezek 2-3 that mentions the living beings and the wheels.

Finally, the last verse's structure (3:15) is clearly overloaded. Either the first or the second וְשָׁב-*clause* must be a gloss. Zimmerli and Greenberg suggest the first⁵³ as the mentioning of the river Chebar would add a further, and perhaps competing, definition of the place, but proposals vary: Lang⁵⁴ for example sees the gloss rather in תֵּל אֶבְיב הַיְשָׁבִים; thus he considers the name of the location, not that of the river, to be secondary. And two manuscripts of S omit 3:15b. There is no consensus as to which clause, if any, is redactional.⁵⁵ Although the question cannot be decided with certainty, there is a slightly higher probability that "river Chebar" has been added *ex post* in order to match the beginning of the vision account in 1:1 and thus to reinforce the *inclusio*.⁵⁶

2.2.2 The (Dis-)Unity of 2:3-3:11 and 1:4-28

The long and complicated genesis of Ezek 1:1-3:15 doubtless goes beyond just explanatory and embellishing glosses. This section aims at following up the signs of redactional work and at discerning and defining the main editorial layers in the redaction history of 1:1-3:15 in their relative chronology.

2.2.2.1 Differences between 1:4-28 and 2:3-3:11

The most essential issue, crucial for all other considerations, is whether or not there is genuine unity between Ezek 1 and the subsequent chapters. To simplify the argument, this shall first be addressed for the body of the text, 1:4-3:11, and after that for 1:1-3; 3:12-15.

⁵² For example Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 42; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 33; and Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 54f.

⁵³ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 13; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 71.

⁵⁴ Lang, "Erste und letzte Vision," 227f.

⁵⁵ For an overview, see Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 132f. note 10.

⁵⁶ On the *inclusio*, or frame, around 1:1-3:15, see below 2.4.1.

The question arises as, even at a superficial reading, considerable differences in style, vocabulary, and content are inevitably noticed. This change of style occurs between the vision in Chapter 1 and the divine speeches that follow. It has even been traced with statistical methods.⁵⁷ While 1:4-28 is written mainly in descriptive verbless clauses, with little action and no direct speech, the bulk of Chapters 2-3 consists of direct speech with a narrative interlude (the eating of the scroll, 2:9-3:3). Within Chapter 1 the use of comparative terms abounds, whereas these are completely absent in the following scenes. Also the manifold grammatical difficulties of 1:4-28, like the arbitrary usage of feminine and masculine suffixes, do not recur any more after 1:26 (with the exception of the gloss 3:13). Only the vocabulary of Chapter 1 is significantly related to P.⁵⁸ Moreover, the length and detail of the two visionary parts (1:4-28c; 2:9-3:3) differs significantly. The subject matter of 1:4-28 is a complex supernatural sight that is very hard to visualize whereas, in the subsequent vision, the most bizarre element is the swallowing of a book scroll, which is relatively easy to imagine. Above all, there is no evident connection between the vision in 1:4-28 and the ensuing speeches and vision in 2:3-3:11. No element of the first vision plays any role in the dialogue. Living beings, wheels, platform, and cloud seem to have temporarily disappeared: neither are they explained in, nor do they in any way interfere with, 2:3-3:11.⁵⁹

All these observations clearly point to a difference of authorship for 1:4-28 and 2:3-3:11.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Houk, "Statistical Linguistic Study," especially 80f. His findings support a different authorship for 1:4-14, 22-28; 1:15-21, and 2:1-3:11.

⁵⁸ On the relationship of Ezek 1 to P, see the excursus on "Ezek 1,4-2,8 und die Priesterschrift" in Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 193-195. Behrens lists especially the dome, the rainbow, and of course the *מְבוֹרַד הַיְהוָה* as references to P. He also includes 2:1-8 in this relationship but the two examples he gives for 2:3, 5 are weak: 2:3 *עַד-עַצְמוֹ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה* ("to this very day") is not exactly the same wording as usually in P, and *נְבִיא* "prophet" in 2:5 is a very general term.

⁵⁹ Even Behrens, in spite of arguing for the unity of 1:4-2:8, has to admit: "Die Bilder der Schilderung scheinen keinen direkten Bezug zum Dialogteil zu besitzen." *Ibid.*, 198.

⁶⁰ The status of 2:1-2 will be discussed later on, as well as that of 1:1-3; 3:12-15.

Indeed, in the first half of the 20th century the unity of the first chapter and the following Chapters 2-3 was frequently doubted.⁶¹ In the 1930's, it were especially Hertrich and Bertholet who denied an original unity between Ezek 1 and 2-3. They suggested two independent accounts, deriving from different periods of either Ezekiel's ministry or the redaction of his book.⁶² Zimmerli however decides in his commentary to believe in an original connection.⁶³ This is for two reasons: by comparing Ezek 1:1-3:15 with Isa 6 (and 2 Kings 22), he finds the tradition-historical "possibility of an original connection": as in the Isaiah account, vision and sending are not to be separated. Moreover, and more importantly, "without the continuation in Ezek 2f, Ezekiel chap. 1 remains a torso"⁶⁴ because a pure sight without any message would be unintelligible as well as unprecedented. Thus Ezek 1 cannot have existed on its own. Under Zimmerli's influence, a number of scholars⁶⁵ have since tended to see 1:1-3:15 essentially as a unified text that subsequently was revised, especially in its first chapter.

2.2.2.2 Ezekiel 1:4-2:2 as Expansion

However, the differences in language, style, length, and content between the vision of the Glory in 1:4-28 and the vision of the scroll in 2:9-10 are substantial. The abrupt shift in style between Ezek 1 and Ezek 2-3 is hard to explain under the assumption of one author only.

⁶¹ For an overview of scholarly opinions before 1969, see Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 13-16.

⁶² Hertrich, *Ezechielprobleme*, 73-81; and Alfred Bertholet and Kurt Galling, *Hesekiel*, HAT 13 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1936), 2-13. In their case however, this was linked to the view that Ezekiel prophesied exclusively or initially in Judah. Also George Ricker Berry, "The Title of Ezekiel (1:1-3)," *JBL* 51 (1932): 54-57; Baumann, "Hauptvisionen Hesekiels," 61; Houk, "Statistical Linguistic Study," 80; Lang, "Erste und letzte Vision," 227-229; and Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 23 separate Ezek 1 from Ezek 2-3. In the visions scheme by Koch, "Visionsbericht, 444f, Ezek 1 and Ezek 2 are listed separately. Other critics are cited in Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 20f.

⁶³ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 33-37.

⁶⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 100 and 109, respectively. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 21, 35.

⁶⁵ For example, Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 59, 61; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 40; Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 20-26; Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 19; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 17-19; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 111f. Similarly already Fohrer and Galling, *Ezechiel*, 6.

On the other hand, Zimmerli's objection, that a mere sight without message cannot subsist alone, is valid and makes Ezek 1:4-28 as an autonomous source unlikely. For Ezek 1:4-28 essentially is a "torso": a text that, by itself, is incomplete in structure and content. Yet acknowledging that Ezek 1:4-28 never existed independently does not exclude it from being a distinct editorial layer. The simplest and most plausible solution is that the vision of the Glory was written as an expansion of the earlier call narrative 2:3-3:11. It provides a new introduction to an already existing text. The message was already there; what the author-editor added to it was a new framework, or foreword, to make it appear in a new light. Like the foreword of a book is meaningless without the book it belongs to, so the vision of the Glory is incomplete without the call narrative.⁶⁶

The hypothesis of 1:4-2:2 as an expansion can explain the noticeable differences between this portion of text and the following speeches without having to assume the transposition or loss of a message conveyed with the vision of Glory.⁶⁷

Traces in the text of this redactional expansion can be seen in 1:28d-2:2. While these verses refer back to the vision (1:28d-f) and contain with the action of the spirit (2:2) element of extraordinariness, they lead up clearly, in a somewhat forced manner, to the transmission of a message and thus introduce the divine speech 2:3-8. The repetition of וְאָשַׁמַע with the participle מְדַבֵּר in 1:28f; 2:2d provides also the only lexematic connection between sight and speech. In this view, it seems plausible that 1:28d-2:2 was written by the same author as 1:4-28c, with the purpose of connecting

⁶⁶ Lang, "Erste und letzte Vision," 225-230; and comparably Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 48-54 offer very similar reconstructions: Lang sees in 1:1, 3b-2:2; 3:12-14 a "Visionsbericht" which has been editorially merged with an older "Berufungsbericht." Yet because he assumes that the writing and the inserting of the *Visionsbericht* took place in two independent steps by two different persons, Lang cannot solve the problem of its incompleteness (ibid., 229 note 17).

Already Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 244 recognized that this problem disappears at once if the vision of the Glory is seen as an expansion.

⁶⁷ Berry, "Title," 55f. supposes the original position of Ezek 1 before Ezek 43; Baumann, "Hauptvisionen Hesekiels," 58 sees it before Ezek 37. None of these transposition theories are convincing.

the new vision as smoothly as possible to the already existing text (from 2:3 onward).⁶⁸ The transition 1:28d-2:2 therefore belongs to the expansion layer, and not to the original call narrative.

2.2.2.3 The Unity of 2:3-3:11

In comparison to the great differences between Ezek 1:4-28 and 2:3-3:11, the latter portion of text appears as a unity in style and content. In fact, the two divine speeches (2:3-8; 3:4-11) especially are very much connected through the use of the same formulae, key words and topics, such as the phrase “rebellious house” and the command not to be afraid.⁶⁹ This has led some scholars to considering them as doublets.⁷⁰ At the opposite extreme, Behrens stresses their diversity.⁷¹ Yet if the two speeches are seen as part of a chiasmic structure, enclosing the vision of the scroll as their centre, it rather seems that 2:3-8 and 3:4-11 deliberately echo each other.⁷² The use of formulae and repetition is, after all, one of the most observable characteristics of the book of Ezekiel and does not automatically imply redaction.

In addition, both speeches are firmly linked to the vision of the scroll in 2:9-3:3. The transition from one part to the next occurs very naturally (2:8; 3:1-3). The

⁶⁸ It is however conceivable that 2:1-2 are originally part of the scroll vision and that the secondary transition only comprises 1:28d-f.

⁶⁹ Refer to the structural analysis in 2.3.

⁷⁰ For example Bertholet and Galling, *Hesekiel*, 8-10 and, more recently, Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 50-55; Pohlmann regards however both 2:3-7 and 3:4-9 as later insertions into the “golaorientierte” call narrative. His mainly content-based (“*tendenzkritische*”) argumentation does not take into account the structural parallel to Jer 1 and is, on the whole, not convincing.

⁷¹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 204f regards 2:3-8 as a secondary compilation from elements of 3:1-9, without proper identity other than being formulaic. He circumvents Zimmerli’s “torso” problem by finding the speech part to 1:4-28 in 2:1-8 but in consequence has to diachronically separate 2:1-8 from the rest of the chapter (ibid., 191 note 31; 199f. note 62; 206-209). However, his separation of 2:3-8 from the subsequent scroll vision is not convincing. His observations on the differences between the two speech parts are somewhat artificial and depend at least partly on his counting 3:10-11 as part of the conclusion rather than part of the speech. For example, he detects a schematic use of the messenger formula in 2:4d but the identical use recurs also in 3:11e. The same applies for the phrase “whether they hear or refuse to” (2:5ab, 7bc; 3:11fg). On the whole, from 2:3 onward, the divine speech bears much greater similarities to what follows than to what precedes. Moreover, Behrens cannot explain why 2:3-8 was created at all if it did not contain a new message. The editor could have simply linked the man above the throne (1:28) directly to the hand holding the scroll (2:9). Hence it is far more likely that the first speech already existed, together with the scroll vision, prior to the insertion of 1:4-28.

⁷² The structural analysis in section 2.3.4 will point this out in more detail.

eating of the scroll symbolizes effectively the absorbing of YHWH's word, which the prophet is to deliver to his people. The commission to "go and speak" and, therefore, the word of YHWH, are central to all three parts of 2:3-3:11 (but not to 1:4-28). Ezek 2:3-3:11 is a clearly intelligible account and free of substantial tensions; hence there is no compelling reason to assume further redaction within it.⁷³

2.2.2.4 Redaction in 1:1-3

Up to now, two main layers have been defined for 1:4-3:11: the original call narrative (2:3-3:11) and an expansion on the Glory of YHWH (1:4-2:2). The next question is whether any parts of the frame, beginning with the introduction, can be allocated to either of these two layers.

Previously, 1:2, 3a have been recognized as glosses.⁷⁴ The remaining parts of 1:1-3 contain no further tensions so that 1:1, 3b⁷⁵ probably forms the oldest part of the introduction. The unique phrase "the heavens were opened" (1:1c)⁷⁶ suggests a natural continuation with the divine apparition coming down from the sky in 1:4-28. Hence 1:1, 3b is the introduction to the vision of the Glory (1:4-2:2), not to the call narrative (2:3-3:11).

As for an introduction to 2:3-3:11, the date in 1:2 (about a year before the next date in 8:1) would certainly fit the call narrative chronologically. However, since 1:2 presupposes 1:1,⁷⁷ it post-dates the expansion and thus can be discarded as an introduction to the older call narrative. Bernhard Lang finds the original introduction

⁷³ With Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 30-33; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 50f; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 67f. Contra Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 390-392. In her opinion 2:3-7; 2:9-3:3; 3:4-9 and 3:10-15* are independent, and only 3:10-11, 15 are original; this separation of word and vision seems a little too rigid.

⁷⁴ Refer to sections 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 above.

⁷⁵ Deciding, as discussed above, for the LXX reading of 1:3b.

⁷⁶ The phrase occurs similarly in Gen 7:11 (P); Ps 78:23; Mal 3:10 but there it signifies the opening of the heavens in order to send down rain or manna. Ezek 1:1c is unique as an introduction to a vision of heavenly things. Michael Konkel, "Ezechiel - Prophet ohne Eigenschaften: Biographie zwischen Theologie und Anthropologie," in *Biblische Anthropologie: Neue Einsichten aus dem Alten Testament*, ed. Christian Frevel, QD 237 (Freiburg: Herder, 2010), 222. (His note 22 contains some erroneous occurrences.)

⁷⁷ As seen above in section 2.2.1.1.

to 2:3-3:11 in 1:3a;⁷⁸ yet the use of the third person singular identifies this half-verse in any case as a gloss, whether it is placed at the beginning of the call narrative or in its present context in Ezek 1. Although it is possible that the original introduction of Ezekiel's call narrative was similar to verse 1:3a, it cannot simply be equated with it.

It is therefore most likely that 1:1, 3b belong to the same redaction as 1:4-2:2, whereas the original beginning of 2:3-3:11 is lost. Whether 1:2 and 1:3a, which are of an even later date, belong to the same redaction or are two separate glosses can remain open at this point.

2.2.2.5 Redaction in 3:12-15

Between the introduction and the conclusion, there is a certain discrepancy as to where exactly the prophet sees the vision: why does he have to go to the exiles in 3:15 if he is already among the exiles in 1:1? This incongruity can be explained by the assumption that part of the conclusion, namely 3:14c, 15*, originally belonged to the scroll vision, while another part of the conclusion (3:12, 14abd) and the introduction (1:1, 3b) were added together with the vision of the Glory.

The continuation of 3:11 can reasonably be found in 3:14c, 15* because *וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלַי הַגּוֹלְיָהּ ... וְאָלַי* is the literal reaction to the request in 3:11ab, “And go (וְלֵךְ), come to the exiles (בְּאֵלֵי הַגּוֹלְיָהּ).”⁷⁹ The double imperative in 3:11ab is echoed by two *wayyiqtol* clauses (3:14c, 15a) employing the same verbs. These verses suggest that the prophet went on his own feet to the exilic settlement of Tel Abib while 3:12a, 14a narrate his translocation by spirit/wind. This use of *רוּחַ* has moreover quite a different meaning from *רוּחַי* “my spirit” in 3:14c. All this might indicate that 3:14c, 15* was not written by the same author as its immediate context.

⁷⁸ Lang, “Erste und letzte Vision,” 227.

⁷⁹ Similarly proposed by Lang, “Erste und letzte Vision,” 227. However, Lang sees only the connection from 3:11 to 3:15, not to 3:14c, which he attributes to 1:1, 3b-2:2 (ibid., 228).

Perhaps מַר in 3:14c alludes to בַּיַּת־מָרִי in 2:3-3:9.⁸⁰ On the other hand, the recurrence of עָלֵי יַד־יְהוָה in 3:14d refers back to 1:3b, while the transportation by רִיחַ recalls 2:2, and the mentioning of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה in 3:12c certainly links back to 1:28. With Lang,⁸¹ 3:12, 14abd can therefore best be ascribed to 1:1, 3b-2:2. Hence the original call narrative includes verses 2:3-3:11, 14c, 15* whilst the vision of the Glory can now be defined as 1:1, 3b, 4-28*; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd.⁸² When adding this expansion to the older call narrative, the redactor merged the conclusions of both accounts and created an overall frame for the entire text unit in 1:1-3 + 3:12-15. The lack of clarity as to where Ezekiel exactly receives the vision is therefore explained by means of redaction criticism: the editor took up the catchwords “exiles” and “by the river Chebar” from the original ending (3:15a) and used them in the introduction (1:1b). Thus he generated an *inclusio* but also some confusion regarding the location of the vision. Perhaps even the overloaded structure of 3:15 might partly be due to this merging process.

2.2.3 Redaction in 1:4-28: The Wheels

Having defined the two major layers of Ezek 1:1-3:15, the call narrative (2:3-3:11, 14c, 15) and the expansion on the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה (1:1, 3b, 4-28*; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd), further redaction can now be discerned within the description of 1:4-28.

As stated previously, Ezek 1 contains a multitude of textual, grammatical, stylistic and content difficulties, and the solutions proposed by critics vary significantly. It is not possible to reconstruct exactly the original wording of this vision report, nor can every potential gloss within 1:4-28 be examined here. Some

⁸⁰ For an unconventional (positive) explanation and translation of v. 14c, see Daniel I. Block, “The Prophet of the Spirit: The Use of *rwḥ* in the Book of Ezekiel,” *JETS* 32, no. 1 (1989): 43-45.

⁸¹ Lang, “Erste und letzte Vision,” 228. The only difference to Lang regards v. 14c, which he does not separate from the rest of v. 14.

⁸² As shown above in 2.2.1.5, verse 3:13 is of later date than its immediate context. The insertion of 3:13 must therefore have occurred later, possibly after (or with) the wheel redaction (see immediately below), in order to reinforce the impression of unity.

smaller additions have already been discussed.⁸³ The focus of this section is on another major insertion, namely the paragraph on the wheels (1:15-21).

The paragraph concerning the wheels (1:15-21) – and consequently their appearance in the vision as such – is a redactional enrichment of the vision. It is significant that the wheels are mentioned neither previously nor afterwards (except in the gloss 3:13). Furthermore, as Zimmerli accurately observed, there is an incoherence in presenting the wheels “on the ground” (1:15b) while until then the apparition seemed to be imagined in the sky (where clouds usually are).⁸⁴ This indicates the merging of two different images: the divinity riding on or being carried by some sort of creature(s), and the image of a chariot.⁸⁵ Consequently, the entire paragraph on the wheels is regarded as a later insertion by many scholars.⁸⁶

The main reason Zimmerli gives for this view is the “slavish dependence on the contents of the text which lay before it, which is only explicable as a secondary formation.”⁸⁷ He relates here in particular to the use of feminine suffixes referring to the masculine wheels, taken as evidence that the wheels’ features are literally copied from the description of the living beings. Even though Zimmerli exaggerates in this argumentation,⁸⁸ it is nevertheless likely that 1:15-21 was written using 1:5-13 as a pattern because the descriptions of both the *היית* and the wheels follow approximately the same order.

⁸³ Refer to sections 2.2.1.3 and 2.2.1.4.

⁸⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 29.

⁸⁵ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 167. The fusion of two different concepts – throne bearers and chariot – is recognized also by Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 56f.

⁸⁶ For a summary of arguments found by various authors for the secondary character of 1:15-21, see Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 18 who however is not convinced by them. See also Block, “Text and Emotion,” 425.

⁸⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 105. See the discussion of 1:15-21 in Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 27-29.

⁸⁸ When looking closely at the text, one notices that despite the parallel structure of 1:5-12, 15-21 not all the content in 1:15-21 is in fact literally copied from 1:5-12. Although it is correct that most of the erroneously female suffixes in 1:15-21 have their parallels in 1:5-12, only v. 17 seems to be copied literally, whereas *לְאֵרְבָּעָה* (16b, 18c) occurs before both with feminine and masculine suffix, but in different phrases; and *וְגִיָּה* (18a) is a new lexeme altogether that is not found before this section. Doubts about Zimmerli’s verdict are voiced also by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 187 note 12. Refer to section 2.5 below.

Additionally, a look at the structure of the vision reveals a striking imbalance between the description following the first *וַאֲרָא וְהִנֵּה* (1:4), and the one following the second (1:15). While in 1:5-13 only one feature of the vision (the living beings) is described in great detail, in 1:15-28 there are not only the wheels, paralleled as much as possible to the creatures, but also the platform, the sounds, the throne, and at last the manlike figure. The change of focus from the ground level upwards and the interruption of all pronominal back-references in 1:22 suggest that a new section begins in 1:22.⁸⁹ Perhaps also the platform was originally introduced by *וַאֲרָא וְהִנֵּה*, which could easily get lost when the paragraph on the wheels was inserted. The original of 1:22a might have read: ... *וַאֲרָא וְהִנֵּה דְמוּת עַל־רָאשֵׁי הַחַיָּה* (And I looked, and behold: [there was] a likeness above the heads of the living creature...).

In conclusion: the description of the vision of the living beings and the throne above the platform has, in a third editorial step, been enlarged through the paragraph of the wheels (1:15-20[21]).⁹⁰ While certainly adding to the strangeness and confusion of Ezek 1, the redactor conferred onto the apparition the very aspect for which it would later become famous: that of a chariot.

2.2.4 Summary

Summarizing the results of the diachronic analysis to this point, the present text unit Ezek 1:1-3:15 consists of an original narrative and two redactional layers, plus a number of smaller additions, which, as mentioned, may in fact be more extensive than explicitly discussed here. The three main layers are, in chronological order:

⁸⁹ Refer to 2.4.2.2 below.

⁹⁰ Within 1:15-21, verses 19-21 seem especially redundant, repeating three times approximately the same content. Additional explanatory glosses in these verses are likely. For example, Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 19 proposes to consider 1:21 and 1:20 as two subsequent glosses. I tend to agree with him as regards v. 21, which appears to be a mere summary. Verse 20, though repetitive, supplies new aspects to v. 19 (spirit), which in turn is necessary because it mentions the *הַיִּוֵּת*. The question is in any case not vital.

- 1) The call narrative (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*)
- 2) The vision of the Glory (1:1.3b-13*, 22-28; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd)
- 3) The passage about the wheels (1:15-20[21])

The call narrative (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*) is the oldest portion of text. Except for the lost introduction, it is a structurally complete text unit. The vision of the Glory (1:1, 3b-13*, 22-28; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd), by contrast, is structurally incomplete and never existed on its own but was written as an extension to the call narrative. It is therefore of a more recent date than the latter. Finally, the description of the wheels makes sense only as an addition to the vision of the Glory. In the following sections, the evaluation of the structure and rationale of each identified layer will give further probability to their distinctiveness.

2.3 Structure of the Original Call Narrative (2:3-3:11, 14c, 15*)

Now that the various editorial layers of Ezek 1:1-3:15 and their relative chronology have been defined, we can proceed to look at the development of the text in terms of its composition. The structure of the oldest portion of text, Ezek 2:3-3:11, 14c, 15*, is determined by the alternating of direct speech and narrative as well as by the use of formulae and refrains. The original call narrative reveals a chiasmic structure of *divine word – vision – divine word*, which somewhat resembles Jeremiah's call narrative in Jer 1:4-19.⁹¹ The two divine speeches (Ezek 2:3-8; 3:4-11) appear as two interconnected variations of the same topic, enclosing, as the centre of attention, the brief vision report of the apparition and eating of the scroll (2:9-3:3). Differently from Jer 1, Ezek 2:3-3:11, 14c, 15* has a conclusion (3:14c,

⁹¹ Also in Jer 1:4-19 there are two divine speeches (1:5-10, 15-19), containing the commissioning of the prophet and the command to speak and not to be afraid. In between these, there are two short visions, the almond branch and the pot (1:11-14), each with a short interpreting dialogue. Jer 1:4-19 is structured by three word-event formulas (1:4, 11, 13). On further connections between Jer 1 and Ezek 2:9-3:9, see Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 202f.

15) and in all probability originally had an introduction, perhaps a word-event formula with or without a date. The usual structure of a prophetic vision account (visionary part + speech part)⁹² is enlarged to the following sequence:

[Lost introduction]	
2:3-8	<i>Speech 1: The rebellious house</i>
2:3-5	I send you – you speak – they will know
2:6-7	do not be afraid
2:8	Transition
2:9-3:3	<i>Vision of the Scroll</i>
2:9-10	sight: hand holding scroll
3:1-3	Transition / speech + action: prophet eats the scroll
3:4-11	<i>Speech 2: Go and speak</i>
3:4-9	go, speak to Israel – they will not listen – do not be afraid
3:10-11	go, speak to exiles
3:14c, 15*	<i>Conclusion: Return to the exiles</i>

Table 1 – Structure 2:3-3:15*

2.3.1 The First Speech (2:3-8)

The first speech 2:3-8 is concerned with the sending of Ezekiel to speak as a prophet to the House of Israel. The single divine speech commences with the characteristic *בְּנִאמְרֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּנִאמְרֵי* in 2:3a.⁹³ It is possible that in its original form the speech was introduced, as in other occasions in Ezekiel, by a word-event formula.⁹⁴ If this was the case, YHWH would be identified more clearly as the speaker. In the present context, this has to be concluded from his words; at the latest with the messenger formula in 2:4d, the reader understands unmistakably who is speaking.⁹⁵

The speech is subdivided by the renewed address *וְאָמַרְתָּ בְּנִאמְרֵי* (2:6a, 8a) into three sections: 2:3-5, 6-7, 8. The first starts with a participle construction, a pointedly

⁹² The presupposed genre-typical structure of prophetic vision accounts is that described by *ibid.*, 32-60 (refer to Chapter 1.3).

⁹³ This formula (*בְּנִאמְרֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּנִאמְרֵי*) is typically employed within the vision accounts in Ezekiel, when introducing divine speech, while other formulae are in use for the rest of the book. Cornelius B. Houk, “Patterns as Literary Criteria in Ezekiel,” *JBL* 88 (1969): 184-190.

⁹⁴ *וְנִאמְרֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּנִאמְרֵי*; for example Ezek 6:1; 7:1; 12:1, 8.17, 21, 26; 13:1; 14:2, 12 etc. (49 occurrences), usually followed by the appellative *בְּנִאמְרֵי*.

⁹⁵ For various interpretations see e.g. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 61f; Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 19, 24f; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 19f; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 76.

performative statement: שולח אֲנִי אֹתְךָ (I am sending you; 2:3b), immediately repeated in 2:4b. Sandwiched between the description of Israel's rebelliousness in *x-qatal* and nominal clauses, the aim of the message is expressed in 2:3-5 in the following two participle and two *w^eqatal* clauses: I send you (twice) – you shall say – they will know.⁹⁶

Subsequently, 2:6a (וְאַתָּה בְּרוּאָדָם) introduces another topic: the prohibition of being afraid (2:6), combined with the repeated order to speak (2:7). The refrain-like repetition of כִּי בֵּית מְרִי הִמָּה⁹⁷ serves both to structure the speech and to emphasize the statement itself. Twice this refrain is preceded by “whether they hear or refuse to” (וְאִם-יִשְׁמְעוּ וְאִם-יִקְדָּלוּ; 2:5ab, 7bc).

A second בְּרוּאָדָם (2:8a), followed by a series of imperatives and one negated jussive (2:8c), leads over to the vision of the scroll. Clearly functioning as a transition segment, 2:8 contains both elements of the previous speech (the term בֵּית מְרִי, the verb שָׁמַע), as well as elements of the subsequent vision (the imperatives פָּצֵה פִּיךָ “open your mouth” and וְאָכַל “eat”).

2.3.2 The Vision of the Scroll (2:9-3:3)

The presenting and eating of the scroll is kept very short and simple: so short that it is often not recognized as an actual vision but treated as some sort of interruption of the predominant surrounding speeches. Despite its brevity, the vision of the scroll contains all the necessary formal elements for the genre: the subdivision into a visionary part (2:9-10) and a speech part (3:1, 3), with the former containing וְאָרָא + וְהִנֵּה + verbless clause and a short description. Formally, the speech part begins

⁹⁶ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 71.

⁹⁷ In this section in 2:5c, 6g. In 2:7d it is shortened to כִּי מְרִי הִמָּה, thus providing a link to 2:8c אֶל-תִּהְיֶי-מְרִי בְּבֵית הַמְּרִי. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 73.

in 3:1 with וַיֹּאמֶר + imperative.⁹⁸ Subsequently, a series of *wayyiqtol* clauses (3:2ab, 3aef), interrupted by a second imperative address (3:3b-d), describes the prophet's obedient reaction of taking and eating the scroll.

This mixture of verbal communication and action gives 3:1-3, similarly to 1:28d-2:2, a transitional character. Only in 3:4a starts a longer portion of plain speech. By embracing elements of both vision and speech, 3:1-3 binds the two parts tightly together. On the level of content, the eating of the scroll is an essential complement to the visionary part 2:9-10; so 3:1-3 and 2:9-10 are related very closely in content and syntax. Hence the section 2:9-3:3 can be considered a formally complete prophetic vision account in itself,⁹⁹ surrounded by a complementary speech at its beginning and end.

Through the shortness of the scene the threefold designation of the words written on both sides of the scroll as "lamentation and mourning and woe" becomes even more impressive. The eating of YHWH's words might remind the reader of Jer 15:16;¹⁰⁰ only that Jeremiah's figurative language is taken literally in Ezekiel. Some scholars¹⁰¹ see in the eating of the scroll a sign that, from now on, Ezekiel will not be able to speak anything but YHWH's word.

⁹⁸ Imperatives in 3:1b₂def. However, the very first verb (אָמַר 3:1c) is a *yiqtol* form. But 3:1cb₂ is textually uncertain; this irregularity could in fact indicate its secondary nature.

⁹⁹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 201 considers this too but concludes that in 3:3 it would be the prophet, not YHWH, to have the last word, which is atypical for the genre.

¹⁰⁰ "Your words were found (וַיִּמְצְאוּ דְבַר יְהוָה), and I ate them (וָאֵכְלֵם), and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart" (NRSV). On Ezek 3:3 in relation to Jeremiah see e.g. Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 166f.

¹⁰¹ For example Hertrich, *Ezechielprobleme*, 78; Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 51-53; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 79. Differently, Odell, *Ezekiel*, 46, sees in Ezekiel's eating of the scroll, besides a sign of his obedience, also a sign of his identification with his people and his "sharing in their suffering," as the scroll symbolizes for her "not the message of divine judgment but the judgment itself" (second citation from: Odell, "You Are What You Eat," 244).

Noteworthy is also the possible allusion of Ezek 2:5; 2:9-3:3 to Deut 18:18, evidenced by Risa Levitt Kohn, "A Prophet Like Moses? Rethinking Ezekiel's Relationship to the Torah," *ZAW* 114 (2002): 249, as one sign of the portrayal of Ezekiel as *New Moses*: "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command" (NRSV).

2.3.3 The Second Speech (3:4-11) and the Conclusion (3:14-15*)

The second speech (3:4-11) repeats Ezekiel's appointment as a prophet to the House of Israel and, in 3:11b, explicitly to the exiles. It is introduced in 3:4 again by **וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּנֹ-אָדָם**, and then once more in 3:10, without interruption of the speech or change of speaker (for it is only YHWH who talks). It is therefore one speech in two sections: 3:4-9, 10-11.

Both sections contain the imperative “go!” (**לֵךְ**: 3:4b, 11a), followed by “and you shall speak” (**וְדַבַּרְתָּ**: 3:4d, 11c), which already occurred in 3:1ef (**וְלֵךְ דַּבַּר**). These words express the core message of this address. While 3:1-3 is centred on the scroll, 3:4-9 deals with the question of listening or, rather, not-listening (**שָׁמַע**: 3:6bd, 7ab), and with the hardening of the prophet against the hardness of his task and his audience (**הִזָּק**: 3:7c, 8, 9a; alluding to the name **יְהוֹזָקָאֵל**). The command not to fear is repeated here more intensely than in 2:6, the negation employing **לֹא** instead of **אַל**. The same refrain **כִּי בַיִת מְרִי הֵמָּה** (3:9d) concludes this section, but here without the doubtful **וְאִם-יִשְׁמָעוּ וְאִם-יִקְדָּלוּ**, since it has already been categorically stated in 3:7 that “the House of Israel will not listen to you.”¹⁰²

The last speech section (3:10-11) explicitly commands Ezekiel to address the exiles (3:11b), whereas previously his commission was directed to the House of Israel in general (2:3b; 3:1f, 4c). The messenger formula of 3:11e recalls the beginning of the very first speech in 2:4d. Noticeably, the classification “rebellious house” does not occur here, while the conditional “whether they hear or refuse to” resurfaces (3:11fg). Thus, although the last two speech sections are formally parallel through their analogous beginning (3:4 // 3:10a, 11a-c) and their ending with a

¹⁰² Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 73 sees in this passage a “heightening” of motives of the first speech, with a more negative trend.

formula, they are in sharp contrast with regard to their tone and attitude towards the intended addressees of the prophet.

The short conclusion echoes the twofold imperative of the second speech: לְדַבֵּר (3:4ab, 11ab) through the two consecutive *wayyiqtol* forms וַאֲלַךְ (3:14c) and וַאֲבֹא (3:15a). The newly installed prophet therefore obeys once more the word of YHWH. However, there is no sign that his obedience to the second half of the command, וַדַּבַּרְתָּ (3:4d, 11c) is equally immediate. On the contrary, the account finishes with Ezekiel sitting stunned, and thus presumably speechless, “among the exiles” for an entire week (3:15c).

2.3.4 The Correlation of the Speeches (2:3-8; 3:4-11) and the Focus of the Original Call Narrative

The two divine speeches (2:3-8; 3:4-11) are very much connected as in both recur the same formulae and topics (commission, commands to speak, Israel’s obstinacy). The great number of stylistic features in *both* 2:3-8 *and* 3:4-11, such as word plays¹⁰³ and synonymous and chiasmic parallelisms – for example וַאֲלֵתִירָא מֵהֶם... / וַאֲתִמְצָחָהּ חֶזֶק לְעִמָּת / הִנֵּה נִתְתִי אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ חֶזְקִים לְעִמָּת פְּנֵיהֶם / וּמִדַּבְּרֵיהֶם אֶל־תִּירָא (2:6ab) and וַאֲתִמְצָחָהּ חֶזֶק לְעִמָּת (3:8) – give the impression of carefully constructed literature. Even as the various elements return in seemingly casual (dis)order, Henry van Dyke Parunak discovers in it the pattern of what he calls a “chiasmic intercalation”:¹⁰⁴ terms or topics from 2:3-8 (A: sending, B₁: command to speak, using the messenger formula, B₂: reassurance, B₃: command to speak, C: exhortation to hear) reappear in 3:4-11 in the combination B₃ A B₂ C B₁. The motif of reassurance always stays at the centre,

¹⁰³ For instance the use in different meanings of the key words דַּבַּר (2:6e, 7a; 3:1f, 4d, 6b, 11d) שָׁמַע (2:5a, 7b, 8a; 3:6-7), מוֹרְדִים/מָרִי (2:3, 5c, 8) and חֶזֶק (3:5, 7-9). For a more extensive list of stylistic features in 1:28-3:15, see *ibid.*, 74f.

¹⁰⁴ H. van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 129-136; “Literary Architecture,” 64f. (quote: note 9). In his dissertation, p. 133, van Dyke Parunak calls the pattern an “inverted chiasm.” For another, more compact, comparison between the two speech parts, see the scheme in Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 113f.

while the two commands to speak (B₁ and B₃) are positioned, in reverse order, at the beginning and the end of the passage.

The chiasmic structure of 2:3-3:11, 14c, 15* emphasizes the short centre part, the vision of the scroll (2:9-3:3). What the prophet sees is, by itself, nothing exceptional: a hand holding a scroll full of written laments. The extraordinary aspect is that Ezekiel is asked to *eat* the scroll and that, despite its bitter content, the scroll tastes sweet. The theatrical eating of the scroll (3:1-3) may be seen as an anticipation of the dramatic and bizarre sign-acts in 4:1-5:4, which lead Ezekiel to literally embody his message.¹⁰⁵ The prophet's obedience to YHWH's command – in contrast to Israel's stubbornness which is strongly emphasized in the speeches – authorizes him, from now on, as a true messenger sent by YHWH. Divine legitimation, in fact, is a general purpose of prophetic call narratives – especially where the message is likely not to be welcomed.

As a call narrative, 2:3-3:15* also has an introductory function. An important aspect of this is the presentation of the three main “actors” on the stage: YHWH, Ezekiel, and the House of Israel (or “House of Rebellion”).¹⁰⁶ Especially in the divine speeches, Ezekiel – and with him the reader – learns YHWH's perspective of the state of affairs: Israel is a stubborn and rebellious people (2:3-4). Nevertheless, Ezekiel is chosen to speak YHWH's words to them (2:4, 7; 3:4, 11). These words will not be pleasant (2:10); there is little hope of finding a welcoming audience or even to be listened to at all (3:7). The only somewhat positive outcome that the narrative seems to consider is that “they shall know that there has been a prophet among them” (2:5de).¹⁰⁷ But the prophet is equipped for the hardness of his task

¹⁰⁵ Refer to Section 6.2.4.2 below. In the context of the call narrative, there is of course no audience; hence the sign seems to be only for the prophet himself. The illustration may, however, be directed at the reader.

¹⁰⁶ On the portrayal of these three characters, see Chap. 7.1.2.

¹⁰⁷ The wording of this phrase (וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי־אָנֹכִי) alludes to the recognition formula (וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי־אָנֹכִי (יהוה), which is an important feature in Ezekiel, recurring 71 times throughout Ezek 5-39 in oracles

(3:8) and qualified by his obedience (2:8; 3:2) by which he has internalized the word of God. From these premises, the story will unfold.¹⁰⁸

2.4 Structure of the Expanded Call Vision (1:1-28*; 2:1-3:15)

As established above, at a later time, the original call narrative was extended to two longer vision accounts enclosed by a frame. In doing so, the redactor artfully used the existing material. The chiasmic structure of the call narrative (speech – vision – speech) permitted him to attach a new visionary part before it (1:1, 3b-28*; 2:1-2), replacing the original beginning, and thus to create two complete vision accounts¹⁰⁹ with a visionary and a speech part each (vision – speech – vision – speech). In this way the redactor did not need to modify the core of the pre-existing narrative; he just needed a “bridge” from the new vision to the older text. This function is accomplished by 1:28d-2:2. The redactor also merged the original conclusion (3:14c, 15*) with new elements (3:12, 14abd), and created an *inclusio* between 1:1, 3b and 3:12, 14-15 that surrounds the new text unit like a frame.

This is the structurally most significant development of Ezek 1:1-3:15, with all subsequent additions having only little no or consequences on its structure. The structure of the text after the insertion of 1:1, 3b-28*; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd is therefore – except for the paragraph regarding the wheels (1:15-21) – equal to that of the present text.

of both judgement and deliverance. According to Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 83*, this allusion signals that the prophet is seen as “a part of the event which comes from Yahweh. ... The historical concreteness of God’s action becomes inseparably tied to the figure of the divine messenger.” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 54. Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 111-114 emphasizes the importance of 2:5de; she sees in it “the key to understanding the point of Ezekiel’s prophetic activity. Whether the people heed the prophet’s words is simply not as crucial as whether they know that it is Yahweh’s prophet who has been speaking to them.” (p. 113). Similarly Franz Sedlmeier, “Transformationen: Zur Anthropologie Ezechiels,” in *Anthropologische Aufbrüche: Alttestamentliche und interdisziplinäre Zugänge zur historischen Anthropologie*, ed. Andreas Wagner, FRLANT 232 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 209.

¹⁰⁸ I assume that, given its introductory and open-ended character, the call narrative stood at the beginning of a first collection of Ezekiel’s writings (see below, 6.2.1.2).

¹⁰⁹ According to Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60, any vision account consists of a visionary part and a dialogue or speech part (refer to 1.3).

As often with biblical texts, there is a variety of possibilities for the subdivision of Ezek 1:1-3:15.¹¹⁰ The present structural overview derives from the reconstructed redaction history of the text unit, and uses formal criteria, like the signal words אָרָא וְהִנֵּה and וַיֹּאמֶר for structuring purposes. It is inspired by the analysis by Behrens, yet applies his criteria more freely and in combination with other considerations.¹¹¹

The proposed structure of the expanded call vision (Ezek 1:1-3:15) is summed up in the following table:

1:1-3	<i>Frame: Title + Introduction</i>	
1:4-2:8	<i>First Vision (Glory)</i>	
	Visionary part	
1:4-13	storm + living beings	
[1:15-21	wheels]	
1:22-28c	platform, throne, and Glory	
	Transition / action:	
1:28d-2:2	prophet falls down / spirit raises him up	
	Speech part	
2:3-5	I send you – you speak – they will know	
2:6-7	do not be afraid	
2:8	Transition	
2:9-3:11	<i>Second Vision (Scroll)</i>	
	Visionary part	
2:9-10	hand holding scroll	
	Transition / action:	
3:1-3	prophet eats the scroll	
	Speech part	
3:4-9	go, speak to Israel – they won't listen – do not be afraid	
3:10-11	go, speak to exiles	
3:12-15	<i>Frame: Return to the exiles</i>	

Table 2 – Structure 1:1-3:15

The overview shows that the structure of 2:3-3:11 as described above is, although inserted in a new framework, remained unaltered by the redaction.

¹¹⁰ For a summary of various investigations on the structure of Ezek 1 (all with different results), see Allen, “Structure and Intention,” 145-151. Other examples are Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 78; Odell, *Ezekiel*, 13-51. Noteworthy are especially the chiasmic structure found by van Dyke Parunak, “Literary Architecture,” 62-66, and the “conceptual structure” by Allen, “Structure and Intention,” 149-151; (also in *Ezekiel 1-19*, 111-114).

¹¹¹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 183-186. One major difference to Behrens will be the transition pieces in between the four main parts. The other is that he attributes 3:10-11, although direct speech, to the frame, whereas I take these verses as belonging in form and content to the speech part of the second vision.

Therefore, the detailed analysis of 2:3-3:11 does not need to be repeated here; it may suffice to point out the structural effects of the expansion on the original call narrative. In the first place, the following sections shall be concerned with the structure of 1:4-2:2 and with the frame formed by 1:1-3; 3:12-15.

2.4.1 The Frame (1:1-3; 3:12-15)

With 1:1-3*; 3:12-15* the redactor formed a deliberate *inclusio* around the entire composition.¹¹² Despite their slight disagreement – as noted, in 1:1 Ezekiel is already “among the exiles by the river Chebar” while in 3:15 he arrives there again – the two paragraphs in their present form are clearly meant to function as a frame that binds together in one scene the two and a half chapters in between. The first verses (1:1, 3b), introduced by *וַיְהִי* + date, set the scene and give general information about time and place, before, from 1:4 onward, the vision begins to unfold. The concluding verses (3:12-15*) also refer to time and place; they are formally marked out by the shift from direct speech (until 3:11) to narrative (from 3:12).¹¹³

The introduction 1:1-3 and the conclusion 3:12-15 are linked through the recurrence of a time reference (1:1a [2]; 3:15c) and of the phrases *בְּתוֹךְ־הַגּוֹלָה* (1:1b; *הַגּוֹלָה*: 3:15a; *בְּתוֹכָם*: 3:15c), *נְהַר־כְּבָר* (1:1b, [3a]; 3:15a), and *יַד־יְהוָה עָלַי* (1:3b; 3:14d). The place reference *שָׁם* (1:3b; 3:15[b]c) is textually disputed in 1:3b. The term *רִיחַ* (3:12a, 14a[c]), which is quite prominent in the conclusion, occurs not in the introduction but at the beginning of the vision itself (1:4b) where it signifies “storm wind”; nevertheless, the link might be deliberate.

¹¹² This frame was later enlarged by 1:2, 1:3a and 3:13, which have been recognized as glosses in sections 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.2, and 2.2.1.5, respectively. Occurrences in glosses are, in the following, set in square brackets.

¹¹³ To count with Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 184-186 the last two verses of the divine speech (3:10-11) to the frame, seems inappropriate, especially as he does not give any reason for this decision.

All lexematic connections are, as argued above, produced by the same redaction that also added the vision of the Glory; they are meant to increase coherence and the impression of literary unity.¹¹⁴ The insertion of the gloss 3:13 enhances this impression further because it takes up, at the very end of the vision report, elements of the vision in 1:4-28, such as a noise/voice, the living beings, their wings, and the wheels.

2.4.2 The Vision of the Glory (1:4-28c)

The first visionary part (1:4-28c) begins in 1:4ab with the typical **וַאֲרָא וְהִנֵּה**, referring to a “storm wind” out of which one by one the different parts of the vision unfold in what becomes a lengthy and complicated description of cloud and fire, living creatures and their faces, wings, and ways of moving. The vision describes the approaching of four bizarre composite creatures, which seem to form a square; this formation can progress in synchrony, without turning, in every direction of the wind.¹¹⁵ Over it, above a dome, a radiating manlike figure is seated on a throne.

2.4.2.1 Language

The language of 1:4-28 is unusual, difficult, and often grammatically incorrect.¹¹⁶ Verbless clauses prevail. Direction phrases like “from its midst,”

¹¹⁴ By listing only three elements of the frame (time reference, exiles at the river Chebar, hand of the Lord), van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 123; “Literary Architecture,” 62f., finds a chiasmatic order between introduction and conclusion.

¹¹⁵ The translation “wind” seems more appropriate in 1:12b, 20ab than “spirit”; with John Woodhouse, “The ‘Spirit’ in the Book of Ezekiel,” in *Spirit of the Living God: Part One*, ed. B. G. Webb, Explorations 5 (Homebush West: Lancer, 1991), 9.

On the use of **רוּחַ** in this and other vision accounts in Ezekiel, see also e.g. Block, “Prophet of the Spirit,” 27-49; Helen Schüngel-Straumann, “Rûah und Gender-Frage am Beispiel der Visionen beim Propheten Ezechiel,” in *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender-Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelen van Dijk-Hemmes*, ed. Bob Becking and Meindert Dijkstra, BibInt series 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 201-215; Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 89-91.

¹¹⁶ For a systematic catalogue of grammatical, stylistic, and other difficulties in Ezek 1:4-28 see Block, “Text and Emotion,” 419-425. For a study of the language of the book of Ezekiel in general, see Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition*; he lists some features that also recur in Ezek 1 – e.g. the confusion of masculine and feminine suffixes (pp. 78-81), the use of infinitive + **ל** as indicative (pp. 106f.), or the interchange of **אל** and **על** (p. 127) – as signs of the linguistic development from pre-exilic to post-exilic Biblical Hebrew.

“under,” “left,” “right,” “above” are recurrent, as is the number “four” (1:5a, 6ab, 8ab, 10bcd [15b]).¹¹⁷ There is an accumulation of the similarity terms *דְּמִוּת* (1:5ac, 10a, [16b,] 22a, 26a₂c[*bis*], 28c), *מִרְאָה* (1:13b, 26a₂c, 27b, 28a_p), *קָצֵן* (1:4e, 7c, 22a, 27a), and the preposition *בְּ* with other nouns (1:7b, 13a, [16c,] 24a [*ter* but twice textually uncertain]).¹¹⁸ Frequently, comparisons to different materials illustrate the sight – all of them having in common that they gleam and reflect light: *הַשֵּׁמֶל* (brass? white gold? amber?),¹¹⁹ bronze, ice, sapphire.¹²⁰ Practically all main elements of the vision are thus compared to a material, sometimes further qualified by an adjective (“gleaming bronze,” “dreadful ice”). The context suggests that the point of comparison is mainly the external appearance, such as colour or light reflection.¹²¹

2.4.2.2 Structure

In its present form, the first visionary part can be divided into three sections: 1:4-13[14], 15-21, 22-28c. The first section (1:4-13[14]) introduces the vision through elements of theophany (storm wind, cloud) and describes the living beings that emerge from the cloud. Despite the many verbless clauses, the scene is dynamic: the few finite verbs are almost entirely verbs of motion.¹²² The first and the last verse, 1:4 and 1:13,¹²³ occupy a prominent position. They are linked by the mentioning of fire (*שָׁר*: 1:4bd, 13ade) and brightness (*הִנֵּה*: 1:4c, 13d); two lexemes

¹¹⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 53 (“Zahl der Totalität”); Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 57f. The number four alludes to the four winds and the four corners of the earth.

¹¹⁸ *דְּמִוּת*: nine of 25 occurrences in the OT; *מִרְאָה*: five of 20 occurrences in the OT; *הַשֵּׁמֶל*: 1:13a, [16ac,] 27ab, 28a₂c; *קָצֵן*: occurs twice more in Ezek 8-11, and only twice outside Ezekiel.

¹¹⁹ On the discussion of the meaning of *הַשֵּׁמֶל*, which occurs only here and in Ezek 8, see e.g. Godfrey Rolles Driver, “Ezekiel’s Inaugural Vision,” *VT* 1 (1951): 60-62; Bodi, *Poem of Erra*, 82-94; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 68f. I will leave the term untranslated.

¹²⁰ *הַשֵּׁמֶל*: 1:4e something in the midst of the fire / 1:27a the upper part of the manlike figure; *bronze*: 1:7c the living beings or their legs; *chrysolite/tarshish*: 1:16a the wheels; *ice*: 1:22a the platform (*קָרָה* always means *coldness* or *ice* in its other six occurrences; Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 254f); *sapphire*: 1:26a₂ the throne.

¹²¹ *קָצֵן* is sometimes translated as “like the gleaming/sparkling of.” The comparison of the “brightness” with the rainbow in 1:28ab goes in the same direction, though here allusions to P might play a role as well. The statement by Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 11 that the vision is described “in technicolor” seems nevertheless a little forced.

¹²² *הִלֵּךְ*: 1:9c, 12ac [+ infinitive construct: 1:9b, 12bd); *סָבַב*: 1:9b, 12d; *יָצָא*: 1:13d. The only exception is *הִיהָ* in 1:12b.

¹²³ Of course, 1:13 is only the last verse if 1:14, as suggested by the LXX, is a gloss (refer to 2.1.2).

that will reappear in 1:27-28. Both verses are also set apart grammatically, as they are not included in the network of pronominal references.¹²⁴ After the first occurrence of the noun *הַיִּוִּת* in 1:5a, in every verse from 1:5b until 1:12d suffixes or verbal forms refer back to it. Through the repetition of *הַיִּוִּת* in 1:13a[b], this verse becomes grammatically independent as it does not have pronominal references back to another verse.

It is arguable whether or not 1:22 originally began with the section marker *וְאָרְךָ הַיָּמִים*. In any case, various reasons suggest the beginning of a new section at this point. Firstly, in 1:22a (*הַיִּוִּת*), the network of pronominal references regarding the living beings is again interrupted. From then until 1:26b, pronominal references – even though grammatically incorrect¹²⁵ – point back to 1:22a, thus tying the section together. In 1:27a, *וְאָרְךָ* + nominal clause (without *וְהַיָּמִים!*) calls for the reader's attention and emphasizes the subsequent sight. This is underscored even more by the chiasm 1:27ab. The content of 1:27-28 seems however too closely linked to the previous verses, which would otherwise remain incomplete, to consider 1:27-28 as an extra section.¹²⁶ Secondly, from 1:22 onward, the subject matter changes: now the prophet not only reports what he *sees* (1:4a, 15a, 27ab) but also what he *hears* (1:24a, 25a). Moreover, the focus of the description moves climactically from the ground level (living beings, wheels) upwards over the heads of the living beings: the platform, then the throne, and finally the manlike figure.

The final verses 1:27-28 are without doubt the high point not only of this section but of the entire description. The comparison words *דְּמִיּוֹת* and *בְּמִרְאָה* appear more frequently. 1:27 repeats once again the above mentioned terms *שָׁאֵל* (1:27b; cf.

¹²⁴ Only *וַיִּמְתּוּכָהּ* in 1:5a refers back to *שָׁאֵל* in 1:4d.

¹²⁵ The singular of *הַיִּוִּת* is awkward, and completely ignored by the pronoun suffixes of the following verses, which are all plural. Also, as already in 1:5-12, their gender varies continually. For a more complete description of this phenomenon see Block, "Text and Emotion," 420f.

¹²⁶ Differently Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 185.

1:4bd, 13ade) and נִגַּן (1:27c, 28a; cf. 1:4c, 13d) and, even more obvious, refers back to the sight קָעִין הַשָּׁמַיִם (1:4d, 27a). In addition, 1:28b takes up the cloud (נֶבֶל) from 1:4b. Hence, through the verses 1:4, 13, 27-28, the otherwise seemingly chaotic vision obtains a recognizable structure. Precisely because the elements in these verses do not yet have any specific function at their first mentioning, they signal, “There is still more to come.” Only at the end of the visionary part can the reader understand what those light effects were indicating at the very beginning.¹²⁷ At the same time, these terms add to the overall impression of light and brightness.¹²⁸ The description, in spite of seeming to lose track in all its confusing details, follows therefore a double movement. On the one hand it shifts its focus from bottom to top (creatures – above their heads – above the platform – on the throne);¹²⁹ on the other hand it “zooms in,” from the first verse onward pointing straight to its last words and its high point where both movements meet: the “appearance of the likeness of the Glory of YHWH” (1:28c).¹³⁰

2.4.2.3 Interpretation of the *Living Beings*

Though not every single facet of the vision can be elucidated,¹³¹ it is important, and worthwhile, to understand the overall purpose of the visionary imagery, in

¹²⁷ With van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 124; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 188f.; contra Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 23 who sees in the repetition of the above mentioned elements only a proof that they are not original in 1:4, even though he recognizes their catalytic function (ibid., 60).

¹²⁸ These terms, “far from being redundant, have a cumulative effect that stresses the awesome and incorporeal character of the vision.” Wilson, “Prophecy in Crisis,” 124.

¹²⁹ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 52. The wheels do not fit very well in this movement.

¹³⁰ Note the similar observations made by Gregorio del Olmo Lete, *La vocación del líder en el antiguo Israel: Morfología de los relatos bíblicos de vocación* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1973), summarized in Allen, “Structure and Intention,” 148f. Comparable also Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 35f. and van Dyke Parunak, “Literary Architecture,” 63.

¹³¹ As Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 61 rightly remarks, this is not necessary, and not even helpful, as it would carry the risk of getting sidetracked by the abundance of detail, thus failing to grasp the overall purpose, which he defines as follows: “Alle rätselhaft und geheimnisvoll wirkenden Aussagen resultieren aus dem Anliegen, den Gott Israels als den alleinigen und souveränen Himmels Gott und sein Verhältnis zur Welt so zu charakterisieren, daß einerseits jegliche Gefahr einer Identifizierung dieses Gottes mit weltlichen Gegebenheiten ausscheidet, andererseits aber doch die geheimnisvolle und nicht nachvollziehbare Wirkungsweise des Gottes Israels als diese

particular of the four extraordinary living beings.¹³² Othmar Keel has convincingly shown that, despite later claims in 10:15, 20, 22, these humanlike upright composite creatures (1:5) are *not* cherubim, because in ancient Near Eastern iconography cherubim are quadrupeds, usually with a lion body (sphinxes).¹³³ Instead, the closest relationship seems to be with either four-winged or two-faced sky bearers known in Mesopotamia.¹³⁴ The absence of exact iconographic parallels suggests that the author merged elements from different provenience into his imagery.¹³⁵ Sky bearers are usually depicted as carrying the firmament, with a deity above it. The image of the “dome” (רָקִיעַ 22a), which separates the Divine from the creatures and everything else below, agrees with this understanding, since, elsewhere in the Old Testament, רָקִיעַ means the firmament of the sky.¹³⁶ Accordingly, what Ezekiel sees is not the Glory of YHWH as enthroned in the temple of Jerusalem, but the Glory of YHWH as enthroned in heaven.¹³⁷

Interestingly, Keel¹³⁸ also finds evidence for a secondary function of sky bearers as guardians of the entrance to heaven, i.e. separating and protecting the sacred realm from the profane. This offers an intriguing interpretation of Ezek 1: by being situated above four such guardians and above the firmament, on a throne, the Glory of YHWH is able to maintain, even in theophany, due distance from the

Welt steuernd und durchwaltend erscheinen kann.”

Similar in this regard also Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 190.

¹³² On the living beings, see Chap. 9.2.1.

¹³³ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 15-22, 191-216; as well as Alice Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels: A Synthetic Study of the Biblical Cherubim*, BZAW 385 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 133-135.

¹³⁴ See Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 207-216, 230-250.

¹³⁵ According to Nielsen, “Visionary Call as Prologue,” 108, 111f., the “transcendence of all possible categories and boundaries” in Ezek 1 in general serves to disorientate the reader, preparing the way for the new order given in the epilogue of the book. Though I do not share all of her conclusions, I find the idea of deliberate “disorientation” as a sign of the imminent rise of something new inspiring.

¹³⁶ Further occurrences of רָקִיעַ: Gen 1:6,7, 8*ter*, 14, 15, 17, 20 [P]; Ps 19:2; 150:1; Dan 12:3; see Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 250-255. However, the living beings in Ezek 1 do not seem to actually carry the “firmament” because their hands are not stretched upwards, and they can move and let down their wings freely.

¹³⁷ Cf. Ex 24:10. As a consequence, this vision is not necessarily a sign that YHWH has already abandoned his temple (contra e.g. Wilson, “Prophecy in Crisis,” 125).

¹³⁸ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 233. He quotes a passage from the Gilgamesh epos (Standard Babylonian Version, Tablet IX ii) where scorpion men protect the entry to heaven.

unclean heathen land¹³⁹ – an idea that fits very well in the book of Ezekiel with its concern for the separation of holy and common.¹⁴⁰

The four creatures move in perfect uniformity: touching each other at their wingtips, they form a permanent square. Despite the general emphasis on motion, this conveys a certain static quality.¹⁴¹ It may indicate a supplementary function of the living beings as throne bearers; almost as though they were themselves an extended part of the throne. In this regard, it is possible to see an analogy with the wooden cherubim-throne in the Jerusalem temple; only that the four creatures are components of a living and itinerant throne. Thus their rigidity paradoxically emphasizes the unlimited mobility of YHWH.

The repeated number four (four living beings, four faces, four wings) further emphasizes the unlimited, omnipresent power of YHWH as it recalls the four winds or four corners of the earth, and thus stands for universality.¹⁴²

2.4.2.4 Summary

In this vision, no plot or action is evolving: this is, despite the undeniable dynamic of the scene, the literary equivalent of a picture. “Although there is awesome movement and tumultuous sound, Ezekiel is more concerned with depicting the potential of divine power than its actual manifestation.”¹⁴³ Nonetheless, through the imagery of the living beings, the picture clearly displays YHWH as the lord of the entire cosmos. Besides, the formation of three vertical levels (creatures,

¹³⁹ A varying interpretation of the living beings is offered by Odell, *Ezekiel*, 26-28. She suggests the four creatures embody demons, who, once rebellious but then submitted to the gods, control the chaotic powers of nature. In this case, the creatures would symbolize the sovereignty of YHWH over all other powers, natural and supernatural alike. The two interpretations converge in the fact that YHWH is portrayed as the undisputed Lord of the cosmos.

¹⁴⁰ Refer to Ezek 42:20; Chap. 5.6.; Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 433; Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 241-243.

¹⁴¹ In fact, for example Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 54 argues that the creatures of chap. 1 are inspired by the temple cherubim, because they appear, in spite of their movement, somewhat ornamental and statue-like (he speaks of their “*feierlich-geheimnisvollen Fixiertheit*”).

¹⁴² See above, 2.4.2.1 note 117.

¹⁴³ Odell, *Ezekiel*, 18. See also the sidebar on p. 19.

firmament, throne), which keep YHWH separated from the ground, emphasizes the divine holiness.

However, the picture remains slightly blurred:¹⁴⁴ the firmament for example is not *made of* ice or crystal; it just somehow *looks like* it. The uniquely abundant use of *דְּמוּת*, *מְרֹאֵה* [מַרְאֵה], and similar comparisons gives the impression of either reluctance or impossibility of a clear identification. Partly, this caution may be determined by the verdict that no human being can see God and live (Ex 33:20), yet the overall impression is that the author attempted explanation, not occlusion.¹⁴⁵ Then again, as Greenberg puts it, “The use of these buffer terms indicates that the prophet wished to have his audience bear in mind always that this was *mar’ot* ‘vision’.”¹⁴⁶ The rich-in-detail description is designed to instil awe and to represent simultaneously YHWH’s transcendence and potentially ubiquitous presence and dominion.¹⁴⁷

2.4.3 The Transition (1:28d-2:2)

The largely narrative transition (1:28d-2:2) functions as a bridge to the speech part in 2:3-8. This is not a typical feature of prophetic vision accounts.¹⁴⁸ However, a number of observations suggest it is more helpful to consider the visionary part concluded with 1:28c and the speech part to be commencing only from 2:3, with 1:28d-2:2 as a transition from one to the other.

¹⁴⁴ Also Ronald E. Clements, *Ezekiel*, WBCComp (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 12f. and Launderville, “Throne-Chariot Vision,” 364 compare Ezek 1 to an intentionally blurred painting.

¹⁴⁵ Theologically motivated reluctance is (in different ways) presumed e.g. by Christoph Dohmen, “Das Problem der Gottesbeschreibung im Ezechielbuch,” in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 330-334; Lieb, *Visionary Mode*, 38f; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 190. See also the different interpretation of the use of *דְּמוּת* and *מְרֹאֵה* as description of representational art in Odell, “Ezekiel Saw,” 168-176; and Odell, *Ezekiel*, 21-26. Her conclusions are, however, not free from difficulties.

¹⁴⁶ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 53. He emphasizes that this “does not signify a reservation with respect to looks but with respect to substance.”

¹⁴⁷ Similarly for example Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 37.

¹⁴⁸ In this view, Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 184f. is formally speaking correct in drawing the line between visionary part and speech part between 1:28 and 2:1.

Firstly, the striking *הוא מראה דמות כבוד־יהוה* (This was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of YHWH) in 1:28c has all the characteristics of a conclusion, especially when considering that the vision at this point (finally) has reached its climax.¹⁴⁹ One would expect the term *כבוד־יהוה* – in its first appearance in the book! – to be positioned in a prominent place, such as the end of a section for instance. Secondly, even though *וַאֲרָא* in 1:28d is not introducing a surprise clause, the emphasized long form of the verb (as in 1:1d and 2:9a) hints at the beginning of a new section. Thirdly, in 1:28d the, until then, predominant verbless clauses give way to a sequence of *wayyiqtol* clauses, indicating that the account now changes its mode from describing a scenario to reporting action, before at last it moves on to direct speech after the second *וַיֹּאמֶר* (2:3a).

The short section 1:28d-2:2 is one of the very few narrative parts in this unit, and paradoxically at the same time a retarding element, as the falling down and getting up delay the proceeding of the actual plot. On the level of content, the intermezzo 1:28d-2:2d shows how Ezekiel positions himself in front of his God. On a structural level, it contains prominent features of both vision (*וַיֹּאֲרָא יְהוָה*; 1:28de) and speech (*וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי כְּוֹרְאָדָם*) (2:1a; *מְדַבֵּר ... וַאֲשַׁמֵּעַ* 1:28f; 2:2d). Thus it serves as bridge between the visionary part and the speech part; all the more as these are the only connections between 1:4-28c and 2:3-8. The first words of the “one talking” in 2:1b contain, characteristically for the genre, an imperative (*עֹמֵד* “stand!”) whereas the second speech section begins in 2:3b with a participle construction (*שׁוֹלֵחַ*). This is an indication that without 2:1-2, the monologue in 2:3-8 would not be identifiable as the speech part of a vision account. The appearance of *רִוַח* (2:2b) recalls both the beginning of the vision in 1:4b and the end of the literary unit (3:12a, 14a) and contributes therefore to its coherence.

¹⁴⁹ Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 107; and Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 104 call the phrase a “colophon.” In this sense, the term *כבוד־יהוה* would refer to the whole apparition, including throne, wheels, and living beings, whereas in other instances the meaning seems narrower.

2.4.4 Effects of the Expansion on 2:3-3:11

Altering the beginning of a text changes how it is perceived and interpreted. This is true even more if the new introduction has a significantly different tone or content than the original account. The redactor who authored and inserted 1:1, 3b-13, 22-28; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd certainly was conscious about the effects this would have on the call narrative, both formally and in terms of content.

Through the expansion, the first divine speech (2:3-8) acquires the formal function of being the speech part of the vision of the Glory, while the second divine speech (3:4-11) becomes the speech part of the scroll vision (2:9-3:3). The former chiasmic structure (speech – vision – speech) was centred on the scroll episode as a miniature vision. Now it is – although apparently unaltered – broken up into two autonomous, though connected, vision accounts (1:4-2:8; 2:9-3:11). It is an effect of this redactional development that the limits between visionary and speech parts in both vision accounts are not clear cut (transition parts in 1:28d-2:2; 3:1-3). Moreover, the similarity of the two speeches has a more repetitious effect in the new composition because in the original narration the speeches surrounded the central piece and therefore mirrored each other; yet after the expansion they are arranged as parallel speeches of two distinct visions. The reader would expect two different messages and therefore perceives the repetition easily as disturbing.¹⁵⁰

Most importantly, the focus of the text has shifted through the expansion from the vision of the scroll onto the apparition of the divine Glory. The impression this description inevitably makes on the reader distracts from the much shorter and simpler vision of the scroll. Now it is not any more the exact transmission of YHWH's words to rebellious Israel that dominates the call vision of Ezekiel but the

¹⁵⁰ Among the older commentaries, for example Alfred Bertholet calls it "eine unerträgliche Überlastung des Stiles." Bertholet and Galling, *Hesekiel*, 9.

demonstration of divine power and the apparition of the Glory of YHWH as such. This of course, has the ancillary effect of enhancing the authority of the prophet, the person as well as his message.

2.5 Effects of the Wheel Redaction (1:15-21)

Once the vision of the Glory had been included in Ezekiel's call narrative, the mysterious vision naturally inspired further speculation and therefore additional enrichment of the text. The many glosses in Ezek 1 are witness to this. The only identifiable redaction that is extended over several consecutive verses is that of the wheels (1:15-21).

This paragraph is situated after the description of the living beings (1:5-13) and before the attention is drawn upwards toward the figure above the throne (1:22-28c). It is introduced by the section marker **וַאֲרָא יְהִינֶה** (1:15ab). The description of the living beings and that of the wheels follow the same pattern: general appearance (1:5-8, 15-16) – “they did not turn” (1:9, 17) – more specific features (1:10-11, 18) – coordinated movement (1:12, 19-21).¹⁵¹ The verb **אָשַׁן**¹⁵² introduces, almost unnoticed, a new dimension of motion as the complex of creatures and wheels now moves vertically as well as horizontally.

The grammatical incoherencies increase in this section because additionally to the masculine suffixes referring to the feminine creatures, feminine suffixes are also used with the masculine wheels. Moreover, the structure of the vision becomes less clear as, probably with the insertion of 1:15-21, the original beginning of 1:22 is corrupted.

¹⁵¹ With regard to 1:20d, 21d, see the suggestion to translate the awkward **רוּחַ הַחַיָּה** as “the spirit of life” rather than “the spirit of the living creature” in Block, “Prophet of the Spirit,” 36f; Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 86-88. This would signify that the wheels, too, were alive.

¹⁵² **אָשַׁן** (to rise) infinitive forms referring to the living beings: 1:19b, 21c; finite forms referring to the wheels: 1:19b, 20c, 21c. Other verbs used in combination with the wheels: **הִלֵּךְ** (1:17ab, 19a, 20b, 21a); negated **סָבַב** (1:17b); **עָמַד** (1:21b).

The wheel redaction therefore exacerbates the problems of Ezek 1. It also inserts a new aspect into the vision, an additional means of transport. The aim of this appears to be a further underscoring of the unlimited mobility of the Glory. It inspired the title by which this vision would become famous: that of the heavenly throne chariot, the *merkābā*.¹⁵³

2.6 *The Intention(s) of Ezek 1:1-3:15*

From the diachronic analysis of Ezek 1:1-3:15 it has become clear that this text underwent considerable alteration regarding both its structure and its intention. The original call narrative mainly aims at legitimizing Ezekiel as an authentic messenger sent personally by YHWH. Indeed, particular emphasis is put on the fact that the prophet should “speak my words” (2:7a; 3:4d), *sine glossa*.¹⁵⁴ The account unites typical elements of prophetic call narratives¹⁵⁵ with elements recurring in Ezekiel’s writings, such as the motif of Israel’s rebelliousness or the physical performance of unusual symbolic actions by Ezekiel on YHWH’s command.

The divine speeches also present the situation into which the newly installed prophet is sent to proclaim the words of YHWH. This situation is not at all promising as the words are of “lamentation, mourning and woe” (2:10), the people will not listen (3:7), and the best that can be hoped for is that Israel might recognize “that there has been a prophet among them” (2:5). In all this, the original call narrative appears as an adequate introduction to the first part of Ezekiel’s ministry, i.e. his proclamation of judgement in the years before the fall of Jerusalem in 587.

¹⁵³ For a study about the afterlife of Ezek 1 in *merkābā* mysticism and other, see e.g. David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision*, TSAJ 16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988) and Lieb, *Visionary Mode*, exploring both Jewish and Christian history.

¹⁵⁴ For example Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 77f; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 79.

¹⁵⁵ As Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 83-85 underlines quite emphatically, the message of Ezekiel situates itself in continuity to Israel’s history with YHWH.

With the expansion of the call narrative through 1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*, a new text is created; although most of the previous account remains unaltered, the focus and subject matter have changed. The exact transmission of YHWH's words to rebellious Israel is now, as it were, overshadowed by the apparition of YHWH's Glory. To be sure, this takes nothing away from the legitimatory function of the text; on the contrary, by provoking awe in the reader, it increases the authority of the prophet even further. If anything, it extends this authority from the message onto the person who received such an overwhelming revelation. What the vision of the Glory states, indirectly but in great detail, is that Ezekiel in fact has seen the heavenly Glory of YHWH in all its splendour and that this was the source of his prophecies.¹⁵⁶

In addition, the theophany of 1:4-28 is a demonstration of sheer divine majesty, transcendence, and holiness.¹⁵⁷ The intention of the enlarged call vision is in the first place to reassure the audience that YHWH really has unlimited authority over the cosmos – therefore, YHWH's words are truly reliable.

The addition of wheels (1:15-21) underlines in particular the aspect of mobility, already present in the motion of the living beings (1:9, 12) and in the very fact that the vision occurs in Babylonia. From this display of omnipresence and supremacy, the reader is invited to conclude that nothing is impossible for YHWH. Hence whatever Ezekiel announces, because it is YHWH's word, it will be realized.

In other words, while for the original call narrative it sufficed to point out that Ezekiel's message had its true origin in YHWH, the vision of the Glory obviously

¹⁵⁶ While the vision is reluctant to affirm plainly that Ezekiel has seen YHWH, it conveys precisely this. Behrens gets the heart of the matter when he states, "Für den Verfasser von Ezek 1 scheint es undenkbar zu sein, sich darauf zu berufen, er habe Gott gesehen. Zur Legitimation seiner Botschaft bedarf er aber genau dieser Aussage. So nähert sich der Visionär dem an, indem er zunächst die überweltlichen Wesen, Gegebenheiten und Lichterscheinungen beschreibt, die mit dem Erscheinen Gottes, genauer: der Herrlichkeit Jahwes einhergehen. Wer so etwas detailliert darlegen kann, der braucht nicht mehr auszusprechen, er habe Jahwe gesehen – das versteht sich dann beinahe von selbst." Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 190; see also 206-209.

¹⁵⁷ The connection of "glory" with "holiness" is made in particular by Jo Bailey Wells, *God's Holy People: A Theme in Biblical Theology*, JSOTSup 305 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 161f.

needs also to demonstrate that YHWH is in fact great and powerful and not restricted by any limitation. Jerusalem's defeat is not YHWH's defeat; YHWH's supremacy is unbroken and independent from the temple and the holy land. With this overture, two key issues of the book of Ezekiel are presented to the reader: the question of God's presence, and the absolute theocentricity¹⁵⁸ that will become apparent as the root of both the announcement of doom and that of hope.

2.7 The "Redactional Vision Account" Ezek 3:22-27

At this point, also the text units following 3:15 need to be briefly considered, as especially 3:22-27 will play a part in the further course of this thesis.¹⁵⁹

The continuation of Ezek 3 is rather enigmatic, and thus often thought to be a secondary composition.¹⁶⁰ Verse 3:16 takes up the "seven days" from 3:15, and opens a new unit by use of יָמַי + relative date + word-event formula.¹⁶¹ The divine speech that follows, Ezekiel's appointment as a watchman (3:17-21), appears like a compilation of 33:7-9 and 18:24-26.¹⁶² However, to examine the relationship among those three texts and the function of 3:16-21 would require another thesis. It is the section immediately afterwards, 3:22-27, that is interesting for the topic of this thesis, due to its pseudo-visionary character and its allusions both to 1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14* and to the call vision 2:3-3:15*.

At first, this text appears like another vision account as it is introduced, like 1:1-3:15, by the hand of YHWH coming upon the prophet (3:22, cf. 1:3; 3:14). But what follows is, at least formally, not a prophetic vision account because the genre

¹⁵⁸ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 63f. 132-141.

¹⁵⁹ The text of 3:22-27 (without textual-critical notes) can be found in Appendix A.

¹⁶⁰ A short summary of the reasons thereof is offered e.g. by Odell, *Ezekiel*, 48 (sidebar).

¹⁶¹ Contra the proposal that Ezek 1:1-5:17 is one single unit, by Odell, "You Are What You Eat," 229-234. Her statement, "That we are dealing with a single composition is evident in the lack of any clear introductory formulas establishing the beginning of 3:16-5:17" (p. 230) is not entirely true.

¹⁶² For example, Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 75; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 86-92. For a contrary view, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 90-93.

typical verb רָאָה does not occur¹⁶³ (in general, the visual aspect is not very prominent). Although הִנֵּה is used (3:23c) it does not introduce a verbless clause but a participial one. The first, narrative, part of the unit (3:22a-24b) is therefore not a proper visionary part; it rather appears like a series of short accumulated quotes from 1:1-3:15: “Glory of YHWH” (1:28c; 3:12c; 3:23c) – “by the river Chebar” (1:1b, [3a]; 3:15a; 3:23d) – “I fell on my face” (1:28e; 3:23e) – “spirit entered in me and set me upon my feet” (2:2ac; 3:24ab) – speech introductions with both דָּבַר and אָמַר (2:1ac; 3:24cd; cf. 3:10-11).¹⁶⁴ As though these allusions were not sufficiently evident, 3:23cd makes it unmistakably clear: the apparition was “like I had seen by the river Chebar.”

The subsequent speech (3:24c-27g) is reminiscent in the same way of the divine speeches in the call vision (2:3-3:11*), through the twofold כִּי בֵּית מְרִי הִמָּה in 3:26d, 27g, the *pars-pro-toto* usage of the messenger formula (3:27cd, as in 2:4cd; 3:11de), and the recurrence of “listen or refuse” (3:27, cf. 2:5, 7; 3:11). However, 3:24c-27g differs significantly from 2:3-3:11 in its content. Instead of being commanded to speak, the prophet is sent back to his house where he is to be bound and silenced. The commissioning he received only a week before thus seems to be rendered impossible, almost revoked, by the very word of YHWH.

The important aspect for the redaction history of the vision accounts in Ezekiel is that the small visionary section 3:22-27 utilizes material of 1:1-3:15 – mainly of 2:3-3:15* but also of 1:1-2:2* – to an extent that it almost certainly was written after the expansion of the call vision through the vision of the Glory; for without

¹⁶³ Only in 3:23d, where רָאִיתִי is used in a retrospective sense (equivalent to pluperfect in English). Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 205f. does not consider 3:22-27 as a vision report but notices that the repetitions have a summarizing effect for Ezek 1-3 while at the same time connecting them to Ezek 4-5.

¹⁶⁴ Once the redactional character of 3:22-27 is established, the list of copied elements can be extended to other vision accounts as well (refer to Chap. 6.6.2.1).

knowledge of 1:1-2:2*, the shorter vision would not be intelligible.¹⁶⁵ Ezek 3:22-27 uses this material to create the appearance of a vision account by evoking some of its key features, in particular of its beginning and ending. In addition, it refers explicitly back to 1:1-3:15. However, 3:24c-27g does add its own specific facet (the binding and muteness of Ezekiel), thus it is conceivable that this part contains older, perhaps even authentic, material.¹⁶⁶

The technique of copying key phrases is applied by the redactor for a distinct purpose, which differs notably from that of 1:1-3:15. The reference to the prophet's inability to speak points forward to 24:26f and especially to 33:22, while his binding relates to the sign acts in Ezek 4 (particularly 4:4-8). In fact, the speech beginning in 3:24 extends without interruption until 4:12, since a fresh introduction occurs no earlier than in 4:13. The larger text unit finishes only in 5:4. Additionally, through catchwords like "Glory of YHWH" or "hand of YHWH" this passage is incorporated in the network of visions that, in the present text, runs from Chapter 1 through Chapters 8-11 and 40-48. In this view, 3:22-27 would seem to originate from an editorial concern for the cohesion of the book;¹⁶⁷ as a consequence, it is estimated at a rather late point in the redactional development of Ezekiel. This would explain the tensions of the section's content with its environment, even though Ezekiel's forced silence still calls for clarification.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ I do not agree with the proposal of reversing this relationship (Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 392f.).

¹⁶⁶ This is argued e.g. by Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 245, 251. He attributes 3:22-24 to the same author as 1:4-2:2* while he considers 3:25-27 to be part of the older call narrative (p. 248). Similarly, Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 170 sees in 3:24c-27 the original continuation of 1:3b-3:11. In my opinion, while it is possible that 3:24def, 25c-27 was part of the original call narrative, different authors should be assumed for 1:4-2:2* and 3:22-24 (or -27).

¹⁶⁷ Michael Fishbane, "Sin and Judgment in the Prophecies of Ezekiel," *Int* 38 (1984): 132f. Odell, "You Are What You Eat," 231 refers to these catchword connections as part of her argument for a single text unit 1:1-5:17; she does not consider that they are typical phrases for visions in Ezekiel and link only 1:1-2:2 and 3:22-27.

¹⁶⁸ A popular explanation is that the redactor inserted material originally belonging to the time during the siege of Jerusalem, or at any rate around 587, at the beginning of the book in order to emphasize their importance; e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 109-111; also Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 33-35, 92-95. Differently, Nicholas J. Tromp, "The Paradox of Ezekiel's Prophetic Mission: Towards a Semiotic Approach of Ezekiel 3,22-27," in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism*

3. Ezekiel 8-11

Ezekiel's first temple vision (Ezek 8-11) is framed and confined symmetrically by an exposition (8:1-4) and a conclusion (11:22-25). In 8:1a the beginning of a new unit is indicated, as it was in 1:1, by יָהִי + date. In 11:24, a change in subject, object, and place indicates the imminent end of the unit. It then concludes with a summarizing *x-qatal* clause (11:25b), while in 12:1 the word-event formula designates the opening of a new section.

3.1 Textual Criticism

Though not as numerous as in Ezek 1, the textual variants in Chapters 8-11 are many, and in some cases they indicate a long term growth or development of the text. Once again, the Septuagint generally offers a shorter reading; yet this is not always to be preferred. Without being exhaustive, some instances seem important enough for consideration; especially those, which either concern a larger amount of text (i.e. a whole verse or sentence) or whose decision might influence further interpretation. The Hebrew text that will be the basis for the following analysis, with verse segmentation and an English translation, can be consulted in Appendix B. Analogous to the previous chapter, wherever divergent readings of the MT and the versions are equally reasonable, the MT shall be kept, indicating the divergent reading either, where parts of the MT are omitted, through () or through footnotes.

and Their Interrelation, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 201-213. An original connection between the eating of the scroll and Ezekiel's muteness, meaning that he will not be able to utter anything but YHWH's words of judgement in the first phase of his ministry, is defended by Ellen F. Davis, "Swallowing Hard: Reflections on Ezekiel's Dumbness," in *Signs and Wonders*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum ([S.l.]: Society of Biblical Literature, 1989; *Swallowing the Scroll*, 48-58. Similarly, but with diverse emphases, Robert R. Wilson, "An Interpretation of Ezekiel's Dumbness," *VT* 22 (1972): 91-104; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 65. With a comparable outcome, Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 77 sets Ezek 3:26 in parallel to Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11 where Jeremiah is forbidden to intercede for the people. The "buchkompositorische und theologische Funktion" of the motif is considered by Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 173-179; Konkel, "Prophet ohne Eigenschaften," 230-234.

For an overview of further opinions and arguments, see Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 49-61. In the course of this thesis, I cannot go into further detail in this regard.

3.1.1 Textual-Critical Emendations of the MT

In some cases, the MT seems to have undergone changes while other versions better preserved the original reading. On such occasions, the MT has been amended.¹

The first of these instances occurs in 8:2b: while the MT reads וְהָיָה דְמוּתָהּ כְּמִרְאֵה-אִשׁ, LXX has καὶ ἰδοὺ ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρός. This means that in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, either of LXX or of MT, a misspelling has occurred of וְאִשׁ instead of אִשׁ or vice versa – or else the change was motivated by theological reasoning, for example intended to avoid what seems the description of God as a human figure. Due to the parallel verse 1:26 (there however the term is אָדָם) and the following description in 8:2cd with its partition between “above” and “below his loins,” the reading preserved in LXX is more probably original.²

In 8:3d, הַפְּנִימִיָּה (the inner) is not represented in LXX^B. Because of its feminine form, the expression cannot refer to masculine שַׁעַר.³ The assumption that הַפְּנִימִיָּה is an abbreviation for “the inner court,” though adopted by many modern translations,⁴ has no parallels in the Old Testament and would moreover change significantly the itinerary of the prophet in Chapter 8. Perhaps originally there was a masculine form (without the last ה), meaning the “inner” (= south) entrance of the gate complex,⁵ or else Zimmerli is right to follow the LXX in leaving it out altogether. In the appendix, the latter option is taken.

¹ The resulting text is accessible in Appendix B. As for 1:1-3:15, emendations are indicated there by < > and the MT is given in footnote. Round brackets () indicate omission by LXX, and square brackets [] redactional glosses.

² With Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 89f.100; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 79; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 191; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 118; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 97f; and even Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 166. See however the opposite view by Jill Middlemas, “Transformation of the Image,” in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*, ed. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons, PrTMS 127 (Eugene: Pickwick, 2010), 130f.

³ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 191f.

⁴ For example RSV, NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, and ESV, as well as the *Elberfelder Bibel* (revised and unrevised editions). Also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 164, 168 and Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 98 seem to follow this emendation without realizing it as such.

⁵ Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 43.

The number of men in the temple court in 8:16b is given by MT as כַּעֲשָׂרִים וְחַמְּשָׁה (about 25). This however could be assimilation to 11:1, given that LXX counts only twenty men. Eichrodt remarks, “This is meant to be a rough estimate of the number present, so twenty-five is as improbable as estimating the weight of a stone at 5½ lb.”⁶ Although the number twenty-five plays a significant role for example in Ezek 40-42, the “round” number of LXX is preferred in this case.

In 9:7ef, the MT vocalization of the verbal forms as *w^eqatal* (וַיִּצְאוּ וַיִּהְיוּ בְעִיר) seems inappropriate. LXX^B renders 9:7def ἐκπορευόμενοι καὶ κόπτετε, thus translating them as imperatives (and acknowledging only one of the two forms of צא). S also interprets these phrases as imperatives. This corresponds to the consonants of the Hebrew text without 9:7e, which might be a gloss or a misspelling. Modern commentators (but not translations) usually adopt the imperative reading.⁷

The entire verse 10:14 (“And each had four faces: the first face the face of the cherub, and the second face the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle”) is omitted by LXX^B. This verse not only interrupts its context rather crudely, but also disagrees with 1:10, of which it is a duplicate, in a way that is singular within Ezek 10. Against the overall tendency of harmonizing Ezek 1 and 10, verse 10:14 is a free paraphrase that even contrasts its original. Thus the most convincing conclusion is that 10:14 is a gloss.⁸

Finally, some manuscripts of LXX do not represent 11:11-12, partly or entirely. Here it is necessary to discern: for 11:11a-12b, this omission can be

⁶ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 108; see also Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 99; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 82.

⁷ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 110; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 197. Also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 178 believes there was originally an imperative, and observes that the MT violates unity of place.

⁸ With Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 199, 239f; David J. Halperin, “The Exegetical Character of Ezek 10:9-17,” *VT* 26 (1976): 138f; Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 58; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 125f. For a (not convincing) defence of 10:14, see Meindert Dijkstra, “The Glosses in Ezekiel Reconsidered: Aspects of Textual Transmission in Ezekiel 10,” in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 72-74. On the relationship between Ezek 1 and 10 see below, 6.4.1.

explained by parablepsis from v. 10d to the identical v. 11b, in which case the MT has preserved the original.⁹ The following 11:12c-e₂ however is missing in older manuscripts of LXX and seems moreover to be copied from 5:7. On the grounds of external and internal criteria, 11:12c-e₂ is therefore considered as a gloss.¹⁰

3.1.2 Particular Problems

In addition, there are five instances of textual disagreements that need special attention due to their greater complexity. Three of these are closely related to redaction-critical issues and will be taken up again in the relevant section.

The first of these is the absence of 8:7bc in LXX^B, which also has no counterpart for the two occurrences of בְּקִיר in 8:8. Wevers prefers LXX's *lectio brevior* over the MT; Zimmerli agrees for 8:7 yet wonders if the omission of בְּקִיר may not be due to the translator not understanding this rare word.¹¹ The relationship of 8:7 and 8:8 is at the first glance unclear: digging through the wall after finding a hole in it seems contradictory. If one does not want to explain this simply with the "non-rational, dreamlike experience of the prophet,"¹² the contradiction and the textual problems seem to indicate that the text has undergone some development before reaching its present shape.¹³ At least 8:7bc are almost certainly a later gloss.

In this context, also 8:8 shall be discussed now although the verse is accounted for by all versions; the issue, therefore, is one of redaction criticism. Even without 8:7bc, the complicated description in 8:7-8 stands out from the common scheme that dominates the chapter.¹⁴ For instance, the report of the second abomination (8:7-13) is much longer than the others (nine verses!). Most striking is that הִנֵּה, otherwise in

⁹ Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 95; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 128.

¹⁰ Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 95; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 128; also Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 200. Zimmerli questions as well the authenticity of 11:11a-12b.

¹¹ Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 81; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 193.

¹² Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 46; as similarly most authors using a synchronic approach.

¹³ See however, in defence of the MT, Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 120.

¹⁴ Refer to Section 3.3.2, Table 4.

8:5-18 always used to introduce the sight of a new abomination (8:5d, 10c, 14c, 16b), indicates in 8:8d merely the discovery of an entrance. This is strange at any rate: since the prophet has dug through the wall himself (8:8c), the surprise expressed by *וַיִּבְרַח* cannot be very great. Rather, 8:8d appears to have the main function to repeat the catchword *וַיִּבְרַח* from 8:7a, in order to enable a neat continuation of the narrative.¹⁵ Therefore, in addition to 8:7bc, on redaction-critical grounds 8:8 also has to be regarded as secondary, though the two glosses came into the text at different times.

The omission of 8:18de in LXX is accepted by many commentators who see in this sentence either a doublet to 9:1 or an insertion inspired by Jeremiah.¹⁶ Yet although 8:18d and 9:1a look almost identical, their meaning differs significantly, as in one case it is the people who cry to YHWH, while in the other it is YHWH shouting at the prophet. The otherwise pointless use of *וַיִּבְרַח* in 9:1a can best be explained as a deliberate repetition from 8:18d, in order to “glue” the two main parts of the vision together.¹⁷ It is assumed that this repetition led to parablepsis and consequently to the omission of 8:18de in LXX.

A purely textual problem occurs in 9:4. Here, instead of the two location indicators of MT (“through the city, through Jerusalem”), LXX has only *μέσῃν τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ*. However, according to numerous commentaries¹⁸ it is more probable that the original text read “through the city” because *city* is “a key term in the account.”¹⁹ The more general term was subsequently explicated by a gloss “through Jerusalem”; then the first phrase was omitted by LXX, possibly through parablepsis.

In three instances (9:3a₁; 10:2c, 4a), the MT uses the singular “cherub,” while LXX, S, V read all throughout the plural, “cherubim.” Cooke sees in the reading of

¹⁵ According to the *Prinzip der Wiederaufnahme*. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 215f.

¹⁶ For example Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 100; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 195; and Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 83.

¹⁷ Similarly Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 175; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 122.

¹⁸ For instance, Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 109; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 85; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 197; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 122.

¹⁹ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 122.

the versions “an accommodation to Gk. and Lat. idiom”²⁰ – yet it remains obscure in what sense Greek or Latin would require the plural of this term, which is in any case foreign to these languages. By contrast, for Greenberg the “MT *krwb* is an error by haplography.”²¹ Considering the noticeable tendency toward assimilation in Ezek 10, in my opinion, Dijkstra’s suspicion that the homogenous plural rendering is the result of a “process of harmonization”²² has more credibility. The difference between “cherub” and “cherubim” in MT, in any case the *lectio difficilior*, may reveal different ideas of what is actually meant, and thus be a clue to distinguish redactional stages. Still, the verification of this has to wait until Section 3.2.3.

Again in 10:7, textual and redactional issues are closely related. In MT, 10:7a has an explicit subject: הַכְּרוּבִים. Since LXX omits this word, the verb ἐξέτεινεν has no explicit subject, i.e. in LXX the man in linen fetches himself the coals out of the fire. This reading not only obeys more exactly the command given in 10:2 but, as will be demonstrated later, the living cherub inside the temple differs from the main cherubim concepts in Ezek 10.²³ For these reasons, the cherub in MT is likely to be a gloss, perhaps inspired by Isa 6:6, or inserted out of respect for the holiness of the place.²⁴ In any case, 10:7d “and he gave it into the hands of the one clothed in linen” does not make sense without a subject that is different from the man in linen. Hence either one opts for the MT reading, or, as a consequence, has to proceed to redaction criticism and consider 10:7de as a prior insertion that needed to be clarified by the introduction of the cherub in 10:7a. In that case, LXX would reflect an intermediate stage of redaction, and MT the final stage.²⁵ The directional phrase מְכַיִּנוֹת לְכְרוּבִים in 10:7a, the only one of its kind not represented by LXX, is most probably a gloss.

²⁰ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 119.

²¹ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 191.

²² Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 66f.

²³ Refer to 3.2.3 below.

²⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 198; Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 115, respectively.

²⁵ Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 68f. On 10:7a, see also Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 127f., 131.

Finally, 10:19d MT contains a third-person masculine *singular* verb (כָּרַבְתָּ) whilst LXX reads καὶ ἔστησαν, i.e. the same verb in third person *plural*. As a result, in LXX the verb refers to the cherubim (10:19a), whereas in MT the only possible subject is the Glory of YHWH, last mentioned in 10:18a. This observation is, once again, not to be resolved by textual criticism alone but only with the help of redaction criticism. It will become evident that the MT has, in this case, conserved the original reading.²⁶

3.2 Redaction Criticism of Ezek 8-11

In addition to the textual-critical issues, the four chapters composing the great vision complex Ezek 8-11 give the impression, even at first reading, that editorial work has taken place: too strong are the tensions and too disparate the material woven into the visionary framework, which provides only a “loose unity”²⁷.

This impression needs now to be reinforced by redaction-critical observations. It appears useful for the argumentation to begin by looking at the most obvious insertion(s) in Ezek 11, and then proceed to examine the tension between total and partial judgement in Ezek 9. The most complex issue, the various redactions that shaped Ezek 10 in particular, will be discussed last and in several steps, according to three significant features: the cherubim, the wheels, and the Glory of YHWH. The sum of these redaction-critical considerations will lead to a reconstructed “original temple vision account” in distinction of several redactional layers.

²⁶ Refer to 3.2.6 below; as well as Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 199, 204.

²⁷ Hals, *Ezekiel*, 47. It is therefore no accident that exactly on these chapters the holistic interpretation by Greenberg has met its toughest criticism and perhaps reached its limits; see Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 151-165; Hossfeld, “Probleme,” 266-277.

3.2.1 The Disputation Words in 11:1-21

The most apparent redaction, which is at the same time the one involving the largest portion of text, concerns the bulk of Ezek 11. It is in fact widely accepted that 11:1-21 are not originally part of the vision account.²⁸ Even the genre *prophetic vision account* is mostly abandoned. Only 11:1 and 11:13 evoke the visionary situation; what is framed by these verses knows little of vision. Rather, in 11:1-13, 14-21 two disputation words can be identified.²⁹

3.2.1.1 The Cauldron Word (11:1-13)

There are several points of tension between 11:1-13 and Chapters 8-10. In the first place: despite the ongoing execution of Jerusalem's population, in 11:1 twenty-five men are undisturbedly gathered at the east gate, noticing neither the slaughtering around them nor the Glory of YHWH passing through precisely this gate. According to the divine instructions in 9:5-7,³⁰ these men should not have been left alive, as in 11:2 they are explicitly qualified as not innocent. Moreover, the transportation by spirit (11:1) does not fit in the context since thus far this feature was needed only for the transport between Tel Abib and Jerusalem but not for moving around just within the temple area.³¹ Finally, the threat of judgement as a future event "at the border of Israel" (11:10b, 11c) becomes almost meaningless in the light of a simultaneous judgement happening *within* the city as depicted in Chapter 9. For these reasons,³² it can be concluded that 11:1-13 was redactionally inserted in its present context.

²⁸ See for example Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 202; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 92, 95; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 131; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 108f. In opposition to the majority, Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 29f., 128-137, 158-165 considers "11,1-13*" to be the oldest part of chaps 8-11. This hypothesis appears to follow more from his postulated "*gola-orientierten Redaktion*" than from concrete text observations.

²⁹ Refer to the structural analysis in section 3.5.1.

³⁰ This is valid for both the original and the redacted version of Ezek 9 (see below 3.2.2) because the men in question are clearly defined as guilty.

³¹ Compare 8:3cd; 11:24ab (similarly 3:12, 14; 37:1) with 8:5a, 7a, 14a, 16a.

³² On these and further observations suggesting the secondary character of 11:1-13 in its present position, see also Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 153f.

Even within itself, 11:1-13 does not give the impression of unity. The twenty-five men with Pelatiah (11:1) do not play any role within the divine speech, which is addressed to the House of Israel (5e); and Pelatiah's death in the city (13ab) does not correspond to the punishment predicted, in the preceding verses, "at the border of Israel" (10b, 11c). This suggests that the framing of the speech in 11:1, 13 was not originally part of the unit.³³ In addition, especially 11:1d-2b contain terminology that is atypical of Ezekiel: שְׂרֵי הַעָם (1d) is a postexilic term (recurring 35 times in Chronicles, but only here in Ezekiel); also עֲצַת/יַעַץ and the expression הַשֵּׁב אֶן (all 2b) occur only here in Ezekiel.³⁴ The remainder of 11:1 is a combination of 8:3 (transport by spirit to a gate) with the location from 10:19 (east gate) and reminiscences to 8:11, 16 (Jaazaniah "among them"; group of men "at the entrance").³⁵ Analogously, the prophet's cry in 11:13c-f appears to be an intentional duplicate of 9:8. Hence it would seem that 11:1-2, 13 replicate phrases from the surrounding vision account and, where formulated freely, employ a vocabulary unfamiliar to Ezekiel. None of this is noticeable within 11:3-12, except for 11:5ab, which resonates 8:1d and the speech introductions in Chapter 8.³⁶ Now, it is precisely 11:1-2, 5a, 13 that – secondarily – give the disputation word the appearance of a vision and create the connection to the visionary context. Since the redactor did not apply as much effort in maintaining a strict logical sequence of events, he caused the tensions we noted

³³ Already Fohrer and Gallig, *Ezechiel*, 58 see in 11:13, and in the names Pelatiah and Jaazaniah in 11:1, later additions.

³⁴ Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 154f. argues on such terminological grounds that the entire unit was written by disciples of the prophet. Yet many other expressions in it are rather typical – like the very term מְקַלְל that Hossfeld calls "verräterisch" (p. 154) although it occurs 71 times in Ezekiel but only 20 times in Chronicles. Other examples of Ezekielian expressions are עֲשֵׂה שְׂפָטִים (11:9c; nine times in Ezek of only 12 times in the OT) and הָרַב אָבִיָּא עַל (11:8b; eight times in Ezek; Lev 26:25; once similarly in Jer). The *verräterischen* termini are concentrated only in 11:1d-2b. Contra Hossfeld, see Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 53f. notes 206 and 208.

³⁵ Refer to 3.5.2; also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 194.

³⁶ On the peculiarity of v. 5a, see also Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 244; Karin Schöpfli, "The Destructive and Creative Word of the Prophet in the Book of Ezekiel," in *Stimulation from Leiden: Collected Communications to the XVIIIth Congress of IOSOT, Leiden 2004*, ed. Hermann Michael Niemann and Matthias Augustin, BEATAJ 54 (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 2006), 114.

above. From the sum of these observations it can be concluded that 11:1-2, 5ab, 13 are not part of the original version of 11:1-13.³⁷

Hence the initially independent³⁸ disputation word consisted of the quoted caldron word (11:3) followed by 11:4, 5c-12. The original introduction – perhaps similar to 12:26-28 and 33:23-24? – would have been altered or substituted in the redaction process by the present frame of 11:1-2, 13.³⁹ The core unit 11:3-4, 5c-12 might be rather old, while the combination with 11:14-21 and the inclusion into Ezek 8-11 are the work of a later redaction.⁴⁰

3.2.1.2 The Word for the Exiles (11:14-21)

The ensuing passage 11:14-21, framed by word-event formula (11:14) and prophetic utterance formula (11:21c), abandons the visionary context altogether. Already for this formal reason it cannot belong to the original account. This “message without vision or action,” as Zimmerli calls it,⁴¹ contains also a noticeable shift with regard to the content of the prophetic words as it holds promises of deliverance for the *golah*. The theme of a tension between the exiles and the population left behind in the land is new and has not played any role whatsoever until this point. The contested statement by the non-exiled remnant (11:15c “they have gone far from the Lord”), which supposes YHWH’s presence in Judah, somewhat contradicts the equally contested quotation of the same population in 8:12 and 9:9 “YHWH has forsaken the land.”⁴² It certainly does not fit well within the background of immediate judgement and YHWH’s abandonment of Jerusalem as narrated in

³⁷ Contra Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 53 note 206; with Schöpflin, “Destructive and Creative Word,” 115.

³⁸ For example Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 49; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 52-55; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 133. By contrast, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 241f; and Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 241-243 suggest that 11:1-13 was written as an expansion directly for its present context.

³⁹ See the analysis by Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 50-55.

⁴⁰ For a full discussion, refer to Chap. 6.2.3.

⁴¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 260. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 247.

⁴² So Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 155; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 131.

Chapters 8-10, nor with 11:3-4, 5c-12. Therefore, its genre and its content prove that the unit 11:14-21 is secondary to its context.

Within the disputation word, there are additional signs of redaction; most notably the use of verbal forms in the second person plural in 11:17c-f, 19b⁴³ and perhaps also the double messenger formula 11:16ab, 17ab.⁴⁴ At least 11:17, 19-20 seem dependent on 36:24-28, though the direction of this dependency is disputed.⁴⁵ Often, 11:19-21 is seen as a (series of) later insertion(s); consequently the original disputation word would have consisted only of 11:14-16.⁴⁶ However, scholars disagree on the matter.⁴⁷ As the evidence is not sufficient to reach a final decision, the issue must be left unresolved here.

Probably 11:14-21 had already its present form, or almost,⁴⁸ when it was combined with 11:1-13 and inserted in the temple vision. In its present position, 11:14-21 becomes an answer to Ezekiel's cry (11:13)⁴⁹ as well as a response to the divine abandonment of Jerusalem and the temple (11:16e).

In summary: two initially independent oracles were joined by redaction and inserted into the account of the first temple vision⁵⁰ via 11:1-2, 5a. The connection

⁴³ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 249, 251; and Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 7-11 see in this a sign of redaction. Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 246f. argues instead for the unity of 11:14-21, practically assuming that material from chap. 36 has been adapted inconsequently.

⁴⁴ Without resorting to redaction criticism, this can also be explained by the two points of the saying 11:15cd to which two distinct answers are given, with v. 16 referring to v. 15c (רחק) and vv. 17-18 to v. 15d (נתן). Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 244 note 129.

⁴⁵ This is assumed for example by Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 111; Lang, *Ezechiel*, 25; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 246-248. On the contrary, Johan Lust, "Ezekiel 36-40 in the Oldest Greek Manuscript," *CBQ* 43 (1981) sees the second half of Ezek 36 as late redactional product because it is lacking in the oldest Greek manuscript Papyrus 967; thus for him, as for Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 94-96, it is 36:26-27 that is dependent on 11:19-20.

⁴⁶ So for example Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 111; Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 155; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 11; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 91-94. However, its integrity, except for v. 21, is asserted by Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 131-132; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 246-249.

⁴⁷ For a short overview in addition to the positions mentioned in the previous footnote, see e.g. Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 319f. According to Krüger, 11:14-20 is altogether a redactional product of what he calls "älteres EB," die older edition of the book of Ezekiel (ibid., 320-323).

⁴⁸ Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 56f. thinks that only v. 21 is dependent on the context of chaps 8-11 and therefore added later than or simultaneously to the insertion.

⁴⁹ On the responsive character of 11:14-21, see Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 241; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 193f. [despite his holistic approach].

⁵⁰ Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 48f., 55-57.

between the two disputation words is achieved through 11:13, a verse that is visibly formulated in view of 9:8. For this reason, the expansion of 11:3-12* into 11:1-13, its combination with 11:14-21, and their incorporation in the greater vision complex occurred in all likelihood simultaneously and by the hand of the same redactor.⁵¹

3.2.2 The Partial Judgement in Ezek 9

Certainly 8:8 and 11:1-21 are not the only secondary passages in Ezek 8-11. Another tension that indicates redaction is the oscillation between total judgement and partial judgement in Ezek 9. While 8:18 and 9:5b-6a announce judgement without mercy for anyone (explicitly not even for little children), in 9:4bc and 9:6bc some people's lives are to be spared. Yet this surviving remainder is not mentioned any further; in fact, its existence would contradict Ezekiel's desperate question "are you destroying the *entire remnant* (כָּל־שְׁאֵרֵיתָ) of Israel...?" (9:8f). Moreover, the double function of the man in linen, first as a scribe marking the innocent (9:2e, 3d, 4, 11b) and then as priestly arsonist throwing fire over the city (10:2, 6-7), appears awkward; especially because he is characterized as scribe only in Chapter 9 but not in Chapter 10, whereas his portrayal as a priestly figure (dressed in linen) is constant. These observations suggest the existence of two layers in the present text.⁵² It appears more probable that the view of a total judgement has later been mitigated by the notion of individual justice than that a partial judgement was extended to general execution. In this case, the marking of the innocent in order to spare them, and therefore the role of the man in linen as a scribe and all references related to this –

⁵¹ Although Ohnesorge recognizes that v. 13 links both words *and* that it is modelled on 9:8, he does not draw the consequence that there never was a "Phase der Selbständigkeit von 11,1-21." Ibid., 56, cf. 48f., 66-68.

⁵² Though many commentators observe the tensions, to my knowledge the first to draw this consequence was Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 46-48. It is adopted by Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 159f. and criticised by Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 143f; and Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 185-188. When Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 390f. tries to see the reason for the judgement in the liberating of those who are suffering because of the situation in Jerusalem, he fails to see Ezek 9 in its context of chaps 8-11* where the judgement is clearly motivated in different terms.

namely 9:2e, 3cd, 4, 6b₁cb₂, 11 and the direction אַחֲרָיו in 9:5b – represent a later redactional level.

Given that such selectiveness was certainly not corresponding with the actual events of 587 – war, siege, and the burning of a city always hit innocent and guilty alike – this change must have occurred at some temporal distance. The tendency of moderating words of judgement seems almost postexilic; but the interest in individual justice⁵³ is found elsewhere in the book of Ezekiel. In brief, it is not possible to date the partial judgement revision.

On the other hand, the lack of a report on the killing (by the six men) and on the scattering of fire (by the man in linen) does not necessarily point toward the omission of material⁵⁴ since it is explicable as a means of maintaining perspective and unity of place: like a drama, the vision account is situated exclusively in the temple area. What happens outside, for instance in the city, can be presumed but not observed by the first-person narrator; hence it is not explicitly reported. It may moreover be argued that the focus of the vision is not on human suffering provoked by the divine punishment but rather on human sin and its consequences.⁵⁵ Therefore a description of the disaster is not necessary.

The redactional layers determined up to this point concern Chapter 9 (the transformation from total to partial judgement) and Chapter 11 (the combination and insertion of two disputation words). The most complex issue, the redactional process in particular for Chapter 10, has been left aside. For the diachronic analysis of the rest of the first temple vision (especially in, but not limited to, Chapter 10), three

⁵³ On the problem of individual justice and the function of the “marking motif,” see Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 103f.

⁵⁴ As e.g. presumed by Hals, *Ezekiel*, 55, 60f. Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 193, “The theme of burning is abruptly broken off with the man’s departure, nothing being said of how the order was executed. This has been needlessly thought to indicate that the original continuation has been lost; it may in fact be due to the desire of maintaining unity of place throughout the vision.”

⁵⁵ In fact, the story is not told from the people’s point of view but from YHWH’s (see 7.2.1).

aspects are essential and shall be discussed in the following: these regard the cherubim, the wheels, and the Glory of YHWH.

3.2.3 The Cherubim Becoming Alive

3.2.3.1 Competing Concepts

In Ezek 10, the reader is confronted with a puzzling mixture of different redactional stages that is not easy to disentangle.⁵⁶ At a closer look, what contributes decisively to the overwhelming impression of confusion is the forced harmonization of diverse concepts. This section will examine a prominent feature of Ezek 10: the cherubim. It will aim to demonstrate that the present text features three different kinds of cherubim.

Already Zimmerli proposed distinguishing between the singular and the plural reading in the MT.⁵⁷ This criterion alone however is not accurate enough and needs to be refined. A careful reading of the verses concerned with cherubim reveals that cherubim appear throughout Ezek 9-11 in singular and plural; both (and simultaneously) inside and outside the temple building; both obviously alive and not.⁵⁸ An examination of all of these aspects will arrive at three different categories of cherubim: one that identifies the cherubim with the living beings of 1:4-28, using the plural (10:1c, 3a, 5, 9bcd, 15a, 16ab, 18b, 19ab, 20d; 11:22a); another one speaking of temple furniture in (collective) singular or in plural (singular: 9:3a₁; 10:2c, 4a; plural: 10:2d, 6b, 7[a]b); and a gloss that mixes both concepts (10:7ad, 8).

A first observation shows: wherever cherubim appear plainly outside the temple building, the plural is always used (10:1c, 3a, 5, 9b, 15a, 16ab, 18b, 19ab, 20d; 11:22a), unless explicitly one of them is meant (10:9cd). Moreover, these

⁵⁶ Observed in detail e.g. in Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 106-120.

⁵⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 204f. See textual criticism in Section 3.1.2.

⁵⁸ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 195-198 illustrates well the problems one incurs when not distinguishing between the diverse concepts.

cherubim are either unmistakably alive (10:5, 15a, 16, 19a; 11:22a), or their being alive is strongly suggested by allusions to the living beings of 1:5-26 (10:1, 9), or it is at least not to be excluded (10:3a, 18b). These cherubim can be the subject of sentences (10:3a, 15a, 19a) and have movement and actions ascribed to them (10:15a, 16ab, 17b, 19a, 22c).⁵⁹ At the first appearance of the wheels in 10:9, the number of these cherubim is defined as four.

The only other instances of (an) evidently living cherub(im) are 10:7ad, 8. The singular cherub in 10:7a, omitted by LXX, is evidently situated inside the sanctuary. He cannot be one of the previously mentioned plural cherubim, since 10:3a states that “the cherubim” are standing “at the south side of the house” while the man in linen enters the temple where his encounter with the single cherub will take place.

On the other hand, when speaking of cherubim inside the sanctuary – apart from 10:7 – none of them ever seem to be understood as animate. To be sure, this is not explicitly said; yet in contrast to the living cherubim outside, the cherubim inside are never the subject of a sentence but are referred to throughout as mere place indicators, in combination with prepositions: “from the cherub” (9:3a₁; 10:4a), “under the cherub” (10:2c), or “[from] between the cherubim” (10:2d, 6b, 7[a]b). The usage varies between plural (when in combination with בְּיָנוֹת) and singular. Where the plural is used, the number of cherubim is not specified.

3.2.3.2 First Concept: Temple Furniture

This leads to the conclusion that the references to cherub(im) inside the temple are most likely alluding to either carved or painted ornaments on cultic objects⁶⁰ or to

⁵⁹ 10:3a עמד; 10:15a, 19b; רום, 10:19a; 11:22a [אֶת-כַּנְפֵיהֶם] וְנָשָׂא; 10:22c הֵלֵךְ. In 10:19a and 11:22a, the cherubim's wings are direct objects.

⁶⁰ 1 Kings 6:29, 32, 35; 7:29, 36. According to Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 8 (cf. 22), the “most common use” of the term cherub(im) is “as an image in the furnishings of the tabernacle and temple.” Hence this meaning cannot surprise here. On pp. 122, 129, 132f, Wood agrees that the singular cherub in the original narrative refers to temple iconography or temple furniture.

the two (!) huge wooden cherubim statues forming YHWH's throne in the most holy place.⁶¹ These are most probably meant in 9:3a₁; 10:4a and it is from their unity as one throne that the collective singular *cherub* becomes understandable. It is therefore unnecessary to regard, as some scholars do, the plural direction clauses in 10:2cd, 6b, 7b as secondary, although this remains a possibility.⁶²

This image of cherubim as a temple feature (9:3a₁; 10:2cd, 4a, 6b, 7[a]b) is the most closely related to the setting of the vision in the temple area and therefore considered as the oldest of the three cherubim concepts: they are statues or ornaments, referred to mainly for orientation. In 9:3a₁; 10:4a they represent the genuine dwelling place from whence the Glory of YHWH is leaving.⁶³

The only instance where the appearance of this type of cherubim is in tension with the temple vision account beginning in Chapters 8-9 is in 9:3a₁. The first part of this verse (9:3ab) is an anticipation of 10:4ab; in its present form, the text makes the Glory of YHWH leave the holy place twice. In 9:3ab, this interrupts the account of the arrival of the seven executioners, and has probably been inserted to render the dialogue between YHWH and the men more dramatic. It is more suitable in 10:4 where the Glory departs at the same time as the man in linen enters the sanctuary. By then, the temple has already been defiled with corpses, and while the burning coals will set fire to the city, YHWH's presence vanishes from his house and from his city. Therefore 9:3ab is regarded as a secondary doublet to 10:4ab, although referring to the same concept of cherubim.⁶⁴

⁶¹ 1 Kings 6:23-28; 8:6-7; see also Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 19-24, and Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 34-37. However, Wood refutes the interpretation as collective singular as "untenable" (p. 122).

⁶² Doubting Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 109, 114; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 204f; and Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 149. Differently in 10:7a (see above, Section 3.1.2).

⁶³ "Der Grundtext hatte ... schlicht vom Weggang des יהוה כבוד geredet und nicht an ein Mitgehen des 10⁴ genannten Keruben oder gar des גלגל gedacht. Das Sich-Wegheben vom Keruben (10⁴) war hier ja gerade das Zeichen des anhebenden Wegganges gewesen." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 240.

⁶⁴ Similarly Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 122f.

3.2.3.3 Second Concept: Throne Bearers

Perhaps precisely these references to cherubim features in the temple gave the inspiration for the second concept, which practically identifies the living beings of 1:5-26 with cherubim. In this redaction, the cherubim are imagined as the living, mobile throne of the Glory of YHWH that replaces his traditional throne in the temple. Both the living beings of Ezek 1 and the cherubim statues in the Jerusalem temple are mixed creatures and throne bearers.⁶⁵ The redactor amalgamated the vitality of the living beings and the sacredness of the cherubim by copying verses from Chapter 1 into Chapter 10⁶⁶ and thus created the idea of a mobile throne waiting at the door to pick up the Glory of YHWH as soon as he left his house.

This idea is expressed in 10:1, 3, 5, [9, 15-17,] 18b, 19abce, 21, 22c; [11:22a]; these verses are therefore attributed to what may be called the *cherubim redaction*.⁶⁷ For most of these verses a corresponding verse exists in Ezek 1 – for example the four faces and four wings of the composite creatures (1:6; 10:21), their straight movement (1:9c, 12a; 10:11, 22c), the dome and the throne above their head (1:26; 10:1)⁶⁸ – though without the grammatical inaccuracies, especially regarding gender, that characterized 1:5-26. The verses in Ezek 10 are arranged in a different order and scattered among the original text. For example, the dome with the throne above it is one of the last elements in Ezek 1 but it appears in 10:1 at the first mentioning of the cherubim.⁶⁹ Striking is the use of the definite article (הַכְּרֻבִּים, הַדָּרָקִיעַ) although dome and cherubim have not appeared before in this narrative.⁷⁰ In 10:1-6, a reference to

⁶⁵ However, the anthropomorphic-composite creatures in 1:5-26 are not described as cherubim; Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 15-22. Refer to 2.4.2.3 and 9.2.1/9.2.2.

⁶⁶ For discussion of the relationship and the dependence between chaps 1 and 10, see Chap. 6.4.

⁶⁷ Verses 10:9, 15-17 are bracketed here as they will be discussed separately below (3.2.4) as part of the wheel redaction. Likewise 11:22 will be recognized (3.2.5) as a later doublet to 10:19.

⁶⁸ Additionally, compare 10:5 to 1:24a; 10:3b and 1:4b have כַּנָּךְ in common; only 10:18-19 have no direct parallels in Ezek 1.

⁶⁹ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 198 speaks of an inverted order in Ezek 10. However, the inversion is not exact.

⁷⁰ Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 121.

the living cherubim (10:1, 3, 5) is inserted before each original verse (10:2, 4, 6). This leads to the impression that *all* cherubim recurrences denote *living* cherubim.

3.2.3.4 Third Concept: Custodian of the Fire

The single living cherub in 10:7a does not fit in either of these schemes. As indicated by the textual divergences, it owes its existence to an even later editor who, out of respect for the holiness of the inner sanctuary, preferred the fire coals to be given to the man in linen rather than him taking them by himself.

Verse 10:8 seems to be an independent gloss trying to explain the hand of the cherub by copying from 1:8.⁷¹

3.2.3.5 Explicit Identity Statements

While the identification of living beings and cherubim was at first implicit, the present text contains a series of pointedly explicit identity statements (10:15bc, 20, 22ab). In contrast to the other editorial insertions, these verses are not copied from 1:4-28 but refer to the frame of the first vision (“river Chebar” 10:15c, 20b, 22b, cf. 1:1b, 3a; 3:15a) and formulate more freely. Hence they do not belong to the “cherubim redaction” but are the work of a later redactor who obviously was concerned that readers might not grasp the intended identity of the creatures described in Chapters 1 and 10.⁷²

A similar explicit back-reference to a prior vision can be found in 8:4. This verse interrupts its context and is in tension with it, as the apparition of the Glory in 8:4 is rather inappropriate at this early point of the account. Contrary to the otherwise gradual movement of the Glory of YHWH away from his traditional dwelling place

⁷¹ Halperin, “Exegetical Character,” 130 note 5. On the genesis of and relationship between 10:7, 8, see Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 68f.

⁷² Also Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 239f. recognizes their resulting from an even later redaction.

in 10:4, 18, 19; 11:23, in 8:4 the Glory appears completely independent from the temple already at the very beginning of the vision. The reference to the “vision in the valley” (3:22-27) shows even more that 8:4 is redactional because 3:22-27 is in itself a redactional compilation.⁷³ On account of its similarity in nature as an explicit back-reference, 8:4 is tentatively attributed to the same redaction as the identity statements in Chapter 10.

3.2.4 The Wheels

In the previous discussion about the cherubim redaction, a group of verses at the centre of Ezek 10 has been largely omitted. These verses, 10:9-16, shall now receive their due attention. Besides speaking of cherubim in the sense of the second concept, 10:9-16 also refer to wheels.

There are two different lexemes for “wheels” in Chapter 10: גַּלְגָּל⁷⁴ and אוֹפְנִיִּים⁷⁵. The two are explicitly identified in 10:13. But while all occurrences of אוֹפְנִיִּים (except 10:6d, 13a_p) are quotations from Chapter 1,⁷⁶ the use of גַּלְגָּל seems to be genuine to Chapter 10. This rare term is found five times in the book of Ezekiel: twice within the passage about the fire coals (10:2c: בְּיָנוֹת לְגַלְגָּל; 10:6b: מִבְּיָנוֹת לְגַלְגָּל); once in identification with אוֹפְנִיִּים (10:13a); and twice closely connected to רֶכֶב (“war chariot” 23:24; 26:10). From the latter two occurrences, גַּלְגָּל is most likely the term for a wheel construction of a chariot or wagon.⁷⁷ Since it appears in 10:2, 6 always in

⁷³ For 3:22-27, refer to Chap. 2.7.

Tooman, “Radical Challenge,” 502 conveniently omits two of these three reasons as he regards 8:4 (with 8:2) as proof for the Glory being outside the temple all throughout the original vision account.

⁷⁴ In Ezekiel only in 10:2, 6, 13; and in 23:24; 26:10. In the OT, only seven further occurrences: Ps 77:19; 83:14; Eccl 12:6; Isa 5:28; 17:13; 28:28; Jer 47:3.

⁷⁵ In the book of Ezekiel exclusively within these two vision accounts: eleven times in Ezek 1:1-3:15, and fourteen times in Ezek 10-11 (10:6d, 9bcde, 10b[bis], 12[bis], 13a_p, 16ab, 19c; 11:22b).

⁷⁶ 10:9bcd quotes 1:15; 10:9e, 10b quote 1:16; 10:12 quotes 1:18; 10:16 quotes 1:19, 21; 10:19c; 11:22b quote 1:20c, 21c.

⁷⁷ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 160f. specifies that גַּלְגָּל can mean wheel, “aber nicht unter dem Aspekt seiner Form, sondern seiner Dynamik: das Rollende“ and suggests instead to think of a theophanic phenomenon, a “sich daherwälzenden Haufen von Wolkendunkel, glühenden Kohlen und Blitzen“. Yet his objections against an interpretation as cultic wagon (pp. 162-167) are valid only for Ezek 1, not for Ezek 10. More recently, Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, “Ezekiel 1,” 154-160 have

parallelism with the temple cherubim,⁷⁸ it seems apt that גַּלְגָּל too indicates a temple feature, perhaps wheeled stands for incense (like the מְכוֹנוֹת described in 1 Kings 7:27-39) located inside the temple.

The paragraph on the wheels (10:9-17), like 1:15-21, employs instead the term אוֹפְנִיִּים. It seems to apply the same technique as the cherubim redaction as it introduces material from Chapter 1 into Chapter 10; yet in comparison 10:9-12, 16-17 shows a notably stronger degree of literal copying than does the description of the cherubim. For example, the latter changes consistently the terminology from הַיּוֹת to כְּרֻבִּים, whereas the term אוֹפְנִיִּים remains unaltered side by side with the older name גַּלְגָּל. The order of the other elements from Chapter 1 (dome, brightness, noise) is generally different in Chapter 10; only the description of the wheels in 10:9-12, 16-17 follows exactly the same order as 1:15-21 and remains together. It is split into two parts only by the even later additions 10:13, 14, 15.⁷⁹ These differences are indications that cherubim and wheels were introduced to 8-11* in two steps, with the wheel redaction presupposing the cherubim redaction. After the cherubim had been secondarily identified with the living beings, another editor, inspired by the גַּלְגָּל, added the passage of the wheels⁸⁰ and anticipated them by a short note in 10:6d.

The identification of the אוֹפְנִיִּים with the גַּלְגָּל in 10:13 interrupts the order copied from Chapter 1. Its function is the same as that of the other identity statements (10:15bc, 20, 22ab). Whether or not 10:13 was written by the same redactor cannot be said with certainty. Although it is the only identity statement to

suggested “that *galgal* may refer to some cosmic halo, a system of brilliance and lightning related to the celestial bodies” (p. 159) or, once identified with the wheels, “as a kind of mysterious ‘stellar system’” (p. 160). However, the article, though offering valuable insights, fails to explain the relationship of the two terms in the redaction history of Ezek 1 and 10.

⁷⁸ 10:2c: מְכוֹנוֹת לְגַלְגָּל מְכוֹנוֹת לְגַלְגָּל אֶל־תַּחַת לְכַרֻּב; 10:6b: מְכוֹנוֹת לְגַלְגָּל מְכוֹנוֹת לְכַרֻּבִּים.

⁷⁹ Textual Criticism has shown that 10:14 is a gloss (3.1.1); 10:15 is as an explicit identity statement (see above) likely to be more recent than its context. On 10:13, see immediately below.

⁸⁰ Also Houk, “Final Redaction,” 50 assumes an introduction of the אוֹפְנִיִּים inspired by the original גַּלְגָּל, though according to him the expansion of Ezek 10 seems to have occurred in a single editorial step. Instead, Halperin, “Exegetical Character,” 130f. presupposes a distinct redactor for 10:9-12, 16-17.

refer to the immediate visionary context of the previous chapters (קרא בְּאֵינִי 10:13a, cf. 8:18d; 9:1a), for the sake of simplicity it will in the following be attributed to the same redactional level as 8:4; 10:15bc, 20, 22ab.

3.2.5 The Glory of YHWH

3.2.5.1 The “Glory of YHWH” and the “Glory of the God of Israel”

The third aspect concerns the entire temple vision account, as throughout Ezek 8-11 two different terminologies regarding the Glory of YHWH occur: כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה (10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a) and כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל (8:4a; 9:3a₁; 10:19e; 11:22c). Zimmerli⁸¹ used this as a criterion for separating editorial layers. This was however met with criticism since the textual basis for both terminologies is too narrow to speak of distinctive concepts:⁸² while כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה is a standard term also used for example in P,⁸³ the expression כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל occurs exclusively in the book of Ezekiel, a total of five times only, of which four are in this vision.⁸⁴

Nevertheless, the fluctuating terminology is intriguing. It can actually be argued that all four occurrences of the designation כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל are redactional. Two of them, namely 8:4 and 9:3ab, have already been recognized as secondary insertions.⁸⁵ The remaining two verses that employ כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל (10:19; 11:22) are doublets, with 11:22 – which seems completely out of place – being a shorter version, repeating only 10:19ace.⁸⁶ It would seem that 11:22 repeats 10:19 in order to return to this point of the narrative after the “excursus” of the two disputation words

⁸¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 204, cf. 237f; similarly also Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 160f.

⁸² On criticism of Zimmerli in this point, see Houk, “Final Redaction,” 49f; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 219f note 43.

⁸³ Thirty-seven occurrences in the OT, of which at least twelve in P (Ex 16:7, 10; 24:16, 17; 40:34, 35; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10 [21]; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6) and ten in the book of Ezekiel: 1:28c; 3:12c, 23; 10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a; 43:4a, 5c; 44:4c.

⁸⁴ Ezek 8:4a; 9:3a₁; 10:19e; 11:22c; 43:2a. The term seems to be original in 43:2 and may have come into the first temple vision from there; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1077.

⁸⁵ Refer to Section 3.2.3 above.

⁸⁶ On the redactional function of 11:22, see 3.2.7. Here it suffices to diagnose its secondary character.

in 11:1-21. In that case, 11:22 – as well as 11:1-21 – would be later than 10:19. As previously noticed,⁸⁷ the latter verse can be defined as part of the cherubim redaction. In 10:19e, the “Glory of the God of Israel” is said to stand over the cherubim, immediately after a change of position of the “Glory of YHWH” (10:18a). This clause reflects the effort of combining the movement of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה, who does not need any means of transport, with the living cherubim throne, introduced in a redactional effort by copying material from Chapter 1. Hence none of the four instances of אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל in Ezek 8-11 are indeed original, although they do not belong to the same redaction. While 9:3ab is presupposed by 10:1, which would remain unintelligible without any previous reference to 1:4-28,⁸⁸ 10:19e is part of the cherubim redaction, and 11:22 appears to be later than 10:19. Lastly, 8:4 has been associated with the identity statements (3.2.3.5).

When, instead, considering the four occurrences of כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה in 10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a, a very coherent concept emerges. The Glory of YHWH is evidently thought to dwell in the temple, its genuine abode, and to depart from it only at the last stage of the judgement, in a linear eastward movement: out of the inner sanctuary (10:4) → out of the temple (10:18a, 19e) → out of the city (11:23). This idea of the Glory linked to the sanctuary corresponds to classic temple theology,⁸⁹ while the temple-independent appearances, for instance in 8:4 (as in 1:28), are more unusual.

Especially 8:4 changes the role of the Glory, because through the mentioning of the אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל immediately before the tour around the temple area begins, the Glory is identified with the guide (originally YHWH himself).⁹⁰ This leads

⁸⁷ Refer to Section 3.2.3 above.

⁸⁸ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 233.

⁸⁹ Cf. 1 Kings 8:11 // 2 Chr 5:14; Ps 26:8. Moreover, כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה is subject only of movement verbs.

⁹⁰ In the present text, the guidance note in 8:5 – and all following – have to refer to the כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל in 8:4. Before the insertion of 8:4, this might have referred to the “likeness of a man” (see below). Originally, YHWH is the implied subject, as becomes clear at the latest in 8:6d₂ (“my sanctuary”). Whether the original text was ambiguous or whether an older introduction was

ultimately to a view of the Glory that is independent from the temple and more than just the visible expression of God's presence, almost some kind of self-determined "hypostasis" of YHWH.

The idea of the Glory moving out of the temple as a sign of judgement, coinciding with the use of כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה, seems therefore to indicate an early layer of the narrative, while all instances of כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל – though not indicating a distinct unified concept – are redactional.

3.2.5.2 The "Likeness of a Man" (8:2a-3b)

Without employing the term כְּבוֹד, but plainly alluding to it, a mysterious "likeness with the appearance of a man" appears immediately at the beginning of the vision in 8:2-3b (introduced by וַאֲרָאָה וְהִנֵּה). The luminous apparition strongly recalls the figure above the throne in 1:26c-27c; the reversed order of the description below and above the figure's loins (1:27ab; 8:2cd) indicates that one occurrence is a quote of the other.⁹¹

The figure seizes the prophet by his hair (8:3b) – and then disappears. The actual transport to Jerusalem is ascribed to "spirit" (8:3c) while, in the present text, it is the Glory of YHWH (as distinct from the manlike figure!) who shows the prophet around the temple and talks to him. Hence the *likeness of a man* is in tension both with the spirit and the Glory. Even when a late date of 8:4 is acknowledged, the tension between the "man" and the spirit remains. Since usually in the book of Ezekiel the entity responsible for visionary transfer is spirit,⁹² and in view of an

replaced in the course of redaction (as suggested by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 215, 218-220) cannot be decided with certainty.

⁹¹ On the literary technique of quoting by inversion, known as *Seidel's Law*, see Michael A. Lyons, "Marking Innerbiblical Allusion in the Book of Ezekiel," *Bib* 88 (2007): 245-247. (with bibliographic references). See also Tooman, "Radical Challenge," 500f. Though recognizing 8:2 as a citation of 1:27, Tooman does not interpret this dependence as a sign of redaction.

⁹² Ezek 3:12, 14; 11:1, 24; 43:5, with the exception of 37:1; 40:1-3 where YHWH brings the prophet to the place of the vision himself.

already noted tendency to copy elements of 1:4-28 into Chapters 8-11, it is highly probable that 8:2a-3b was not part of the original account.⁹³ The *likeness of a man* is lacking also in the conclusion of the vision where other main elements (spirit, divine vision) return. The introduction of the manlike figure apparently was meant to create a further link between the three כְּבוֹד visions (1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48). While the vision of the Glory of YHWH concludes with the likeness of a human being, 8:2a-3b is inserted at the very beginning of the first temple vision, thus creating continuity between the two accounts. Moreover, given that the luminous manlike figure was (before the insertion of 8:4) also the prophet's guide, 8:2a-3b combines aspects of 1:26-27 and of the "man with a measuring reed" in 40:3-43:5.⁹⁴

Both 8:2a-3b and the "cherubim redaction" are under strong influence of 1:4-28; for this reason, 8:2a-3b is also regarded as part of the cherubim redaction.⁹⁵

3.2.6 The Original Temple Vision Account

Up to this point, the diachronic analysis has focussed on recognizing redactional insertions as well as distinguishing diverse concepts and/or nomenclatures regarding the cherubim, the wheels, and the כְּבוֹד. Now these distinctions will help to establish the oldest parts of Ezek 8-11.

The previous considerations have qualified the following portions of text as not original:

- The combination and insertion of 11:1-13, 14-21⁹⁶
- The sparing of the innocent in 9:2e, 3cd, 5b[אָרְרִי], 4, 6b1cb2, 11⁹⁷

⁹³ Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 39-41; Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 138; whereas Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 210 considers only 8:2cd as secondary. For Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 250, the entire frame 8:2-4; 11:22-25 is part of the "priestly redaction." In my view, except for the verses discussed, the existence of a frame (8:1, 3c-e; 11:23-25) is a feature already of the original account.

⁹⁴ Hossfeld, "Tempelvision Ez 8-11," 157. On the man with the measuring reed, see Chap. 9.1.2.

⁹⁵ I am aware that this is a simplification. It merely states a similarity as to the technique and the effect of the redaction and probably sums up a group of insertions under one title.

⁹⁶ Refer to Section 3.2.1.

- Verse 9:3ab⁹⁸
- The living cherubim in 10:1, 3, 5, 18b, 19abce, 21, 22c⁹⁹
- The glosses 10:7a[הַכְּרוּבִים]d, 8¹⁰⁰
- The identity statements (referring to Ezek 1-3) 10:13, 15bc, 20, 22ab and 8:4¹⁰¹
- The passages concerned with the wheels (אֹפְנִיּוֹת): 10:6d, 9-12, 15-17¹⁰²
- The “Glory of the God of Israel” (כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל); 8:4a; 9:3ab; 10:19e; 11:22c¹⁰³
- The “likeness of a man” in 8:2a-3b¹⁰⁴

The remaining verses, minus the textual glosses discussed in Section 3.1, are therefore: 8:1, 3cde, 5-7a, 9-18; 9:1-2*, 5-10*; 10:2, 4, 6abc, 7*, 18a, 19d; 11:23-25.

This sequence contains no substantial tensions or contradictions in its structure or content. It is framed by an *inclusio* of miraculous transport from Babylonia to Jerusalem and back (8:1, 3*; 11:24-25), and narrates a series of four visions on Jerusalem’s abominations (8:5-6, 7-13*, 14-15, 16-18), followed by the divine judgement (9:1-7*, 8-10; 10:2, 6*, 7*) during which the Glory of YHWH gradually departs from the temple and the city (10:4, 18a, 19d; 11:23).

This literary unity is occasionally questioned in the literature, mainly in two points. The first is the unity of Chapters 8*-9*. The seeming independence of the four visions on Jerusalem’s cultic abominations and the divine judgement from each other has led some scholars to doubt their original connection.¹⁰⁵ However, the two chapters relate to each other like the proof of guilt and the announcement of

⁹⁷ Refer to Section 3.2.2.

⁹⁸ Refer to Section 3.2.3.2.

⁹⁹ Refer to Section 3.2.3.

¹⁰⁰ Refer to Sections 3.1.4 and 3.2.3.

¹⁰¹ Refer to Sections 3.2.3.5 and 3.2.4.

¹⁰² Refer to Section 3.2.4.

¹⁰³ Refer to Section 2.5.1.

¹⁰⁴ Refer to Section 2.5.2.

¹⁰⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 224f. names Hertrich, *Ezechielprobleme*, 86 in this regard; more recently this is argued by Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 132, 142.

judgement in a prophetic oracle of judgement;¹⁰⁶ hence both Ezek 8 and 9 would be incomplete on their own. Moreover, there are numerous connections between the two chapters, for example through the repetition of 8:12d-f in 9:9e-g and that of 8:18a-c in 9:5de, 10ab, as well as through the similarity between 8:17e and 9:9cd and the echo of 8:18d in 9:1a.¹⁰⁷ Both Chapters 8 and 9 are well rooted in the book of Ezekiel. At central points of the vision account various, almost formulaic, expressions are used that recur elsewhere throughout the book, especially in its first part: for instance, the phrase “my eye will not spare, and I will not have pity” (8:18bc; 9:10ab; cf. 9:5de) is found also in 5:11; 7:4, 9; 16:5, and alluded to in 20:17; 36:21.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, 8:17e; 9:9de is comparable to 7:23; [12:19]; and 9:10c to 16:43; 22:31. In addition, 7:20-24 seems almost like a “preview” of the subsequent vision. On the whole, the impression of a logical sequence in the narrative predominates and there is, in this regard, no need for redaction criticism.

The second question concerns Ezek 10. As we have seen, this chapter is at a first glance rather confusing; besides, it seems to relate only marginally to the previous narrative. As a result, the *entire* Chapter 10 is sometimes regarded as a secondary addition,¹⁰⁹ an overflow of some editor’s fantasy. However, it seems more likely that those verses that potentially are original – i.e. those concerned with the man in linen (10:2, 6-7*) and with the exodus of the *כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה* from the temple (10:4, 18-19*) and eventually from the city (11:23) – are indeed part of the original account. In the first place, it is hard to find reasons for the addition of the passage of the man in linen and the fire coals, since this is, in contrast to the remainder of Chapter 10, not inspired by material from Chapter 1. Especially if Vogt’s redaction

¹⁰⁶ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 208; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 130. See below, 3.3.

¹⁰⁷ The subsequent structural analysis will point these out (3.3.4).

¹⁰⁸ On the typical Ezekielian use of this formula, see Thomas M. Raitt, *A Theology of Exile: Judgment/Deliverance in Jeremiah and Ezekiel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 51-53, 55f.

¹⁰⁹ For example Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 230-232 assumes that Ezek 10 was written by the same author as Ezek 1; Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 149-156 regards even the oldest verses of Ezek 10 (for him 10:2*, 4, 7*, 18-19*) at least as the fourth phase of redaction.

criticism of Chapter 9 is accepted and the marking of the innocent is not part of the original account,¹¹⁰ the man in linen still needs to receive his specific mission. His priestly dress fits well with his task of entering the inner part of the temple where only priests are admitted. Even more is the appearance of the Glory of YHWH a highly probable feature of the narrative, precisely because of its temple environment, since the temple is his traditional dwelling place (Ps 26:8). Moreover, an ulterior act of punishment would be expected after the repetition of the verdict in 9:10. The scattering of the fire coals over the city and the abandonment of the temple signify a further stage of the judgement: after the population has been killed and the sanctuary has been defiled, the city itself is about to be consumed by fire and the temple is vacated of the divine presence.

For a majority of scholars, the episode about the man in linen and the departure of the Glory of YHWH are part of the original narrative.¹¹¹ The same verses (10:2, 4, 6abc, 7*, 18a, 19d) employ the phrase כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה, the first concept of cherubim, and the term אֱלֹהִים. Additionally, the singular verb form in 10:19d MT¹¹² indicates that this clause is meant to refer to the Glory, in direct continuation to 10:18a.

In conclusion, the original account of the first temple vision (Ezek 8-11*) is defined as 8:1, 3cde, 5-7a, 9-18; 9:1, 2a-d, 2fg, 5*, 6adef, 7-10; 10:2, 4, 6a-c, 7*, 18a, 19d; 11:23-25.

3.2.7 Summary and Redaction History

Redaction criticism has demonstrated that, on a closer reading, the great “divine vision” in Ezek 8-11 reveals itself as a collection of miscellaneous components, centred on the themes of Jerusalem and the temple, which has grown

¹¹⁰ See above, 3.2.2.

¹¹¹ See for instance (with slight differences) Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 202-206; Houk, “Final Redaction,” 42-54; Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 49-51; Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 161-164.

¹¹² Refer to 3.1.2.

over time before reaching its present shape. The main steps in the redaction history of Ezek 8-11 that have been detected are illustrated in the graphic below.

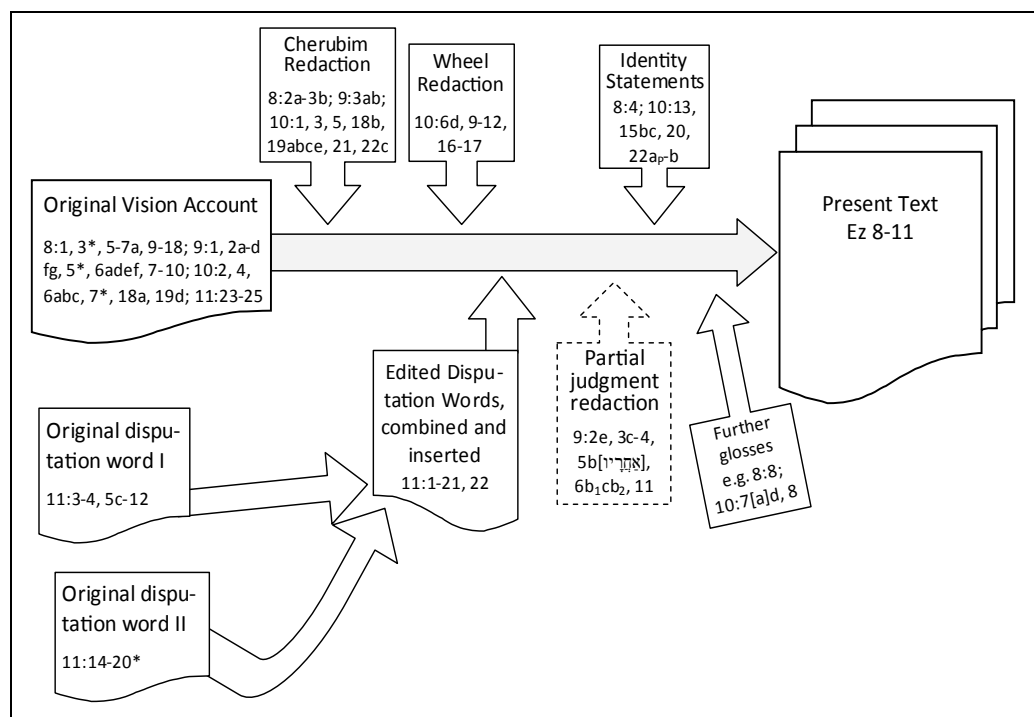


Chart 1 – Ezek 8-11 Redaction History

This way of summarizing inevitably results in simplification but it is a helpful orientation tool. The relative chronology shown by the chart can be affirmed only for some of the redactions; in particular, the sequence of the insertion of 11:1-21, of the identity statements, and especially of the partial judgement redaction, is not certain.

The oldest part is the original temple vision account as defined in the previous section, including most of the frame.

The mentioning of cherubim and of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה in 10:2-7*, 18-19* provoked a gradual harmonization of this vision with the vision of the Glory of YHWH in 1:4-28 through copious insertions that are strikingly dependent on Ezek 1.¹¹³ This harmonization took place in at least four distinct steps, concerning: the description of the cherubim (cherubim redaction), that of the wheels (wheel redaction), the explicit identity statements, and later glosses. The common effect of these harmonizing

¹¹³ For reasons why the dependence is in this direction and not vice versa, see below, 6.4.1.

redactions was to create cross-references between the two vision accounts in the first half of the book, and thereby to increase the book's coherence.

Within the extended vision, another vision – or better: two originally independent disputation words introduced as a vision – was added (11:1-13, 14-21), probably because of the shared theme *Jerusalem*. Although the core parts of both disputation words are old, their combination, framing and insertion occurred at a later redactional stage of the book. The following consideration suggests that 11:1-21 was most likely inserted after the cherubim redaction, and even after the wheel-redaction: subsequent to the disputation words, 11:22 abruptly returns to the cherubim motif, repeating 10:19 in abbreviated form. This observation can be explained by Kuhl's *Prinzip der Wiederaufnahme*: in order to return to the vision account, abandoned at the end of Chapter 10, the redactor who inserted 11:1-21 added also 11:22. For this reason, in the chart above 11:22 is shown together with 11:1-21. If this assumption is correct, 11:1-22 were inserted later than the cherubim redaction. Furthermore, it seems more probable that at that point both 10:19 and 11:22 were already in their present form, i.e. including the wheels.

On the other hand, 11:1b is catchword-connected to 10:19d through the repetition of *שַׁעַר בַּיַּת־יְהוָה הַקֶּדְמוֹנִי* (the east gate of the house of YHWH). This connection (as does the *Wiederaufnahme* in 11:22) ignores 10:20-22, which “disturb” the transition from 10:19 to 11:1. This leads to the assumption that at least the identity statements in 10:20, 22 were inserted after 11:1-22.

In 9:2-11, the concern about individual justice led an editor to modify the total judgement into a partial one, by adding 9:2e, 3cd, 4, 6b₁cb₂, 11, and the direction *אֶחָרַיִ* in 9:5b. Due to the lack of any evident dependence on other redaction layers, it is so far not possible to date this redaction (as indicated by the dotted line in the

chart). It presents, however, such a contrast to the totality of judgement predicted by the original vision that it seems safe to assume a date after Ezekiel's generation.

Generally, two tendencies are discernible throughout the redaction process: softening and harmonization. Through the incorporation of 11:14-21, and through the transformation of Chapter 9 into a partial judgement, the harshness of the message of destruction and doom is mitigated and rendered more easily acceptable. On the other hand, the various redactional steps towards the identification of elements of this vision with 1:5-26 create strong literary references that contribute to the impression, so characteristic of the book of Ezekiel, of monolithic coherence.

3.3 Structure of the Original Temple Vision Account (8-11*)

Up to now, the redaction-critical analysis led to the reconstruction of an "original temple vision account" and to the distinction of the redactional layers, of which the present text is compiled. In the following, the structure of Ezek 8-11 shall be traced along the lines of its redaction history, as some insertions were large enough to change the overall composition of the account. The coherence of the identified layers will provide further support for the diachronic findings. Though it is a problem that most editorial activity cannot be dated exactly, not all of it is relevant in terms of structural analysis. For instance, the partial-judgement revision, like all quantitatively small insertions, produces an appreciable change in content but not in structure.

The following procedure is suggested: Firstly, the structure of the reconstructed "original account" will be examined as the basis for any later development. Secondly, attention will briefly be given to the effect of the different redactions trying to harmonize this vision with Chapter 1, namely the cherubim redaction, the wheel redaction, and the identity statements (all concerning mainly Chapter 10). The

third step shall address the structural shift occurring with the insertion of 11:1-22 and thus the structure of the present text.

The original account Ezek 8-11* is framed by an exposition (8:1, 3cde) and a conclusion (11:24-25). Within the frame, two main parts are discernible, which correspond in their content to the two parts of an oracle of judgement:¹¹⁴ “proof of guilt” (8:5-18) and “word of judgement” (9:1-11:23*). Both parts are structured into several scenes. The first consists of four scenes (8:5-6, 7-13*, 14-15, 16-18); the second part of three (9:1-7*, 8-10; 10:2-11:23*).

8:1-3*	<i>Frame: From Exile to Jerusalem</i>
8:5-18	<i>Demonstration of Guilt in Four Scenes</i>
8:5-6	1. The Image of Jealousy north of the Northern Gate
8:7-13*	2. 70 Elders in a Hidden Room in the Gate
8:14-15	3. Women Weeping the Tammuz at the Temple Gate
8:16-18	4. 20 Men Worshipping the Sun in the Inner Court
9:1-11:23	<i>Judgement in Three Scenes</i>
9:1-7*	YHWH and the Six Executioners
9:8-10	Ezekiel’s Cry and YHWH’s Answer
10:2-7*, 18-19* 11:23	YHWH and the Man in Linen / YHWH Abandons the City
11:24-25	<i>Frame: Return into Exile</i>

Table 3 – Structure 8-11*

3.3.1 The Frame (8:1-3*; 11:24-25)

Similar to 1:1-3:15, the frame gives basic information about time, place and circumstances of the vision. Ezek 8:1a offers again a date, the fifth day of the sixth month of year six (counted from Jehoiachin’s exile). The verses 8:1-3*; 11:24-25 form an *inclusio*, especially through the transfer from the prophet’s house in exile to Jerusalem and back, both times by means of the spirit, using the same two verbs (נשא and בוא *hiph.*) in the same sequence, with the same object (“me”).¹¹⁵ Further equivalences are, for instance, the presence of exilic addressees (8:1c; 11:24b, 25a)

¹¹⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 208. Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 130 calls it appropriately “a visionary version of a two-part oracle of judgement.”

¹¹⁵ וַרִּיחַ נְשָׂאתֵנִי וַתְּבִיאֵנִי כְשֶׁדִּימָה אֶל־הַגּוֹלָה... (8:3cd) // וַתָּבֵא אֹתִי רִיחַ... וַרִּישֶׁלְמָה (11:24ab).

and the term “divine vision”;¹¹⁶ the beginning and ending of the latter is clearly marked by וַתִּפֹּל עָלַי שָׁם יַד אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה (8:1d) and וַיַּעַל מֵעַלִי הַמְרֹאָה (11:24c), respectively. That the *inclusio* is built only by the four verses 8:1, 3; 11:24-25 is an additional sign of the redactional growth of the frame.

3.3.2 The “Proof of Guilt” (8:5-18)

The demonstration of guilt 8:5-18 is characterized by the repetitious structure of its scenes, which does not occur any more in the subsequent chapters. Each scene is a miniature vision account:¹¹⁷

<p>Visionary part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי + place indication - וַהֲגִיחַ + sight of non-YHWH cult performance
<p>Speech part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי - Question: “Have you seen, son of man?” - Announcement (three times of greater sins, once of punishment)

Table 4 – Structure of the Scenes in 8:5-18

Since each scene starts with וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי (8:3d¹¹⁸, 7a, 14a, 16a) plus a place indication, a movement occurs each time from one location of the temple area to another. Subsequently, וַהֲגִיחַ points to a situation described in verbless or participle clauses (8:5d, 10c-11d, 14c, 16b-e).¹¹⁹ Both elements together form a subcategory of a surprise clause.¹²⁰ The agents in each scene are, in order, the House of Israel in general (6e), seventy elders (11a₁),¹²¹ a group of women (14c), and a group of men (16b).

¹¹⁶ בַּמְרֹאָה בְּרִיחַ אֱלֹהִים (8:3d) or, in 11:24b: בַּמְרֹאָה אֱלֹהִים.

¹¹⁷ This structure follows basically the typical features for the genre vision account as described by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-75. See also his tables on pp. 217f., illustrating the structure of Ezek 8-11 from a form-critical point of view.

¹¹⁸ Here וַתִּבֵּא, as the subject of the sentence is still the feminine רִיחַ.

¹¹⁹ Ezek 8:5 differs to this scheme; this is probably due to the fact that it is the first scene and the prophet needs to be ordered to do for what he has been brought: to see. Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 130 finds parallels of this element in Gen 13:14 and Zech 5:5.

¹²⁰ See Andersen, *Sentence*, 95; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 217, 221f.

¹²¹ Kathleen Rochester points to the correspondence of the elders sitting before the prophet (1c) and the elders “specifically named as being blameworthy” (10c-12). According to her, this suggests that

Though it is difficult to locate some of the places in detail,¹²² it is evident that the prophet moves in a North-South direction. He probably begins his journey at a north city gate (8:3d),¹²³ from where he gradually approaches the temple building¹²⁴ until he stands right in front of its entrance (8:16) where he remains. He does not enter the temple. According to the increasingly holy environment in which they are committed, the idolatric practices become more and more serious.¹²⁵

The speech part is introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי, followed by the almost rhetorical question “Have you seen, son of man?” three times as *qatal-x* clause (הֲרָאִיתָ בְּנוֹ-אָדָם; 8:12b, 15b, 17b), in 8:6ab as participial clause. In the first, second, and fourth scene, there is an additional commentary, which always uses the verb עָשָׂה (8:6ce, 12c, 17cd) and attributes the responsibility for the abominations to Israel as a collective (addressed in various expressions).¹²⁶ The first three scenes finish with a refrain-like prediction of more תוֹעֲבוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת (8:6fg, 13b-d, 15cd),¹²⁷ whereas the fourth scene – as there will not be any more abominations on display – reassumes the demonstration of guilt (8:17), and creates the connection to Chapter 9 by concluding with a threat (8:18) of which 18bc will be repeated in 9:10ab, whilst 18d is immediately taken up in 9:1a. In this way, both parts are in form closely linked to each other.

the former receive, instead of a response to their enquiry, “a categorical denunciation for their sins and the sins of the community they represent.” Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 117.

¹²² The descriptions in 1 Kings 6-8 are not very explicit regarding the surroundings of the temple; and since archaeological data of the first temple is scarcely available, we do not know much about the exact position and order of the courts and gates of the temple/palace complex. Accordingly, very different suggestions about Ezekiel’s way in this vision have been made. For a summary of a number of those, and possible locations of courts and gates, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 211, 227, 233f; and Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 139-141.

¹²³ See above, 3.1.1.

¹²⁴ 8:7a – entrance to the (greater?) court (i.e. the court that enclosed both the temple and the palace. As suggested by 1 Kings 7:9, 12, it must have been surrounded by a wall, and it is not very probable that this coincided directly with the city wall) / a room in the gate to this court (8:10).

8:14ab – northern gate to the inner temple court, now entering the actual temple complex.

8:16ab – inner temple court, at the entrance to the temple building, between *ulam* and altar.

¹²⁵ I am not exploring here the questions of which cult practices are likely to be described in Ezek 8, whether or not they are connected to each other, and whether or not this is a realistic description of early sixth-century Jerusalem religiosity. This is done in many of the commentaries and, e.g., in Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 119-136. For my purposes, it suffices that the author of Ezek 8-11* obviously saw them as an adequate symbol and summary of his fellow countrymen’s sins.

¹²⁶ 8:6ce “House of Israel” (in G^B simply “they”); 12c “the elders of the House of Israel”; 17cd “house of Judah.”

¹²⁷ Note the chiasmic sentence structure of *x-yiqtol (longer form)* and *yiqtol (longer form)-x*.

Further connections exist between the second and the fourth scene (8:7-13*, 16-18): both times the idolaters are a group of men. The description of the scene and the accusation are longer, compared to the other scenes. Key phrases that will be quoted again in Chapter 9 are pronounced first within the second and the fourth scene: 8:12d-f, 18a-c in 9:9e-g and 9:5de, 10ab respectively.¹²⁸

As Jill Middlemas has pointed out, the emphasis on the visual experience throughout 8:5-18 is striking. All four scenes have in common that objects, or images, are involved in worship.¹²⁹ Through the repetitiousness of the scenes, 8:5-18 has the character of a sequence of four partial visions that are each showing one aspect of “abomination” but, when read together, they illustrate the completeness of Israel’s sins.¹³⁰

3.3.3 The “Word of Judgement” (9:1-11:23*)

The visionary genre is less explicit in 9:1-11:23*.¹³¹ This part is structured into three sections (9:1-7*, 8-10; 10:2-11:23*) whose limits are defined mainly by change of actors or of speaker. The first section (9:1-7) begins with a speech introduction that differs considerably from the previous ones: it employs קרא instead of אמר, further emphasized through קול גדול, and the formalized infinitive לְאמַר, which occurs here for the first time. At the same time, 9:1 is almost identical to the preceding verse 8:18d. In the hearing of his witness Ezekiel, YHWH calls the seven “executioners.”¹³² The approaching of the men is described in 9:2a-e through verbless and participial clauses so as to express simultaneity with the speech.¹³³ The

¹²⁸ The first and the third scene are shorter and have the catchword “north” (צפונה: 8:5bcd, 14b) in common.

¹²⁹ Middlemas, “Transformation of the Image,” 117-123.

¹³⁰ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 208; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 220f. For an analysis of the single scenes, see e.g. Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 119-136.

¹³¹ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 226.

¹³² These seven men will be discussed in more detail in Chap. 9.1.1.

¹³³ The plot moves on in *wayyiqtol* clauses from 9:2fg onwards. The orders are given in form of imperatives and negated imperatives (9:5-7).

seven executioners follow probably the same route as the prophet, as they too come from the north, which is known as the direction of disaster and advancing enemies. The new arrivals and their receiving orders dominate the content of this section while the prophet remains in the background.

The end of the divine speech, followed by יהי + infinitive construct (9:8a), marks the transition to the next section (9:8-10). Now – and here only – the prophet reacts not to an order but out of his own initiative. His cry, pointedly dramatized through the interjection אָהֵא, is formulated as a participial question, concerning the present of the speaker. This passage is the only dialogue of the narrative (since except here only YHWH speaks), but there is no direct answer: YHWH's reply emphasizes once more the weight of Israel's guilt, and this not even in further explications but simply by repeating phrases of Chapter 8.¹³⁴ This reiterated justification of the punishment implies a “yes, I am indeed about to destroy...” rather than a comforting or merciful answer. If Ezekiel's cry was meant as an intercession on behalf of Jerusalem (such as Am 7:2, 5), it was not successful. This is the last word addressed to the prophet within this edition of the vision account – and he too remains silent from now on. There is nothing more to be said: judgement is inevitable, as well as justified.¹³⁵ This scene is the only one without a change in location.

The substitution of the prophet as YHWH's dialogue partner by the man in linen (10:2) signals the beginning of the third and last scene. This section contains two simultaneous actions: after YHWH has instructed the man in linen to go into the temple, take burning coals, and scatter them over the city (10:2), the man enters the

¹³⁴ Compare 9:9e-g to 8:12d-f; 9:10ab to 8:18bc; also, though with differences, 9:9c to 8:17e.

On 9:8-10, see also Chap. 7.1.1.2 below.

¹³⁵ On the “Notwendigkeit und innere Folgerichtigkeit des Ablaufs von Schuld, Zorn und Gericht“, see also Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 416-419 (quote: 418).

By contrast, Wong, *Idea of Retribution*, 163-170 interprets the killing in Ezek 9 as a כרת penalty (Lev 7:20) and thus as inherently aimed at controlling impurity, rather than as plain punishment.

building (10:6). At the same time, the Glory of YHWH starts moving to the threshold of the temple (10:4). The two movements – inwards and outwards – cross each other; they are narrated step by step, one sandwiched into the other, in *wayyiqtol* clauses:¹³⁶ first the command (10:2, imperative); then the first movement of the Glory (10:4); then, referring back to the command through וַיִּהְיֶה + infinitive, the execution of the command (10:6-7); finally the exodus of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה in a straight eastward line out of the temple and the city to the mountain of olives (10:18a, 19d; 11:23). The burning of the city is not explicitly recounted.¹³⁷ Likewise, the text gives no hint about any further relocation of the divine Glory (whether it moves towards the exiles), but finishes at this point.

The three sections of 9:1-11:23* are interrelated. The first and the third section (9:1-7* and 10:2-11:23*) correspond the most as both deal directly with the commencing judgement over the city, impersonated by the 6+1 men (none of whom appear in the second section). The man in linen has a bridging function since he is mentioned in both scenes (9:2d; 10:2a, 6a). While “the city” is important in all three sections, only the second (9:8-10) additionally uses “Jerusalem.” The dialogue of the second section is a retarding element that once again justifies the radicalism of the judgement with the radicalism of the guilt and sinfulness of the House of Israel, which had culminated in their conviction that YHWH would not see them as he had already abandoned the land. Although standing out, 9:8-10 is well rooted in its context: it is related to the first section through the common terms נִכָּה (9:5c, 7f, 8a) and מְשַׁחֵת (9:1c, 6a, 8f), and when YHWH orders the destruction of the city, he quotes 8:18a-c (though in imperative form) as he will again in 9:10ab. On the other

¹³⁶ 10:2abf, 4ab, 6cd, 7acef, also the later addition 10:7d, 8.

¹³⁷ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 197. “The vision’s unity of location dictated that the theme of the burning of the city be broken off with the exit of the man dressed in linen to execute his orders.” *Ibid.*, 193. In Isa 6, and in other contexts, fire coals have a cleansing function. Whether purification is implied here as well, is hard to say: the context suggests rather a meaning of judgement, but the two concepts might not exclude each other. The issue is discussed e.g. by Wong, *Idea of Retribution*, 170-178.

hand, the second and the third section are linked by the verb מלא in 9:9cd and 10:4bc; these verses are not only parallelisms in themselves but parallel to each other as well,¹³⁸ though they stand in stark contrast to each other as far as their content is concerned: on the one side the cloud and the brightness of the Glory of YHWH, on the other bloodshed and injustice throughout the city and the land.¹³⁹

3.3.4 Connections between 8:5-18 and 9:1-11:23*

Ezek 8:5-18 and 9:1-11:23* seem at a first glance relatively independent of each other. This impression may be supported by the different semantic fields dominating the two chapters.

On the one hand, Chapter 8 is dominated by cultic vocabulary, especially pejorative expressions for non-YHWH cults: for example סמל הקנאה (8:3e, 5d); שְׁקִיץ (8:10c); וְכָל־גִּילְיָי בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל (8:11d); מִבְּכּוֹת אֶת־הַתְּמוּזָה (8:14c); לְשֹׁמֵשׁ מְשַׁתְּחוּיָתָם (8:16e), and especially the over and over repeated תוֹעֵבוֹת (8:6d,g, 9c, 13c, 15d, 17c).

On the other hand, in Chapters 9-10*, particularly in the first section, verbs concerned with destruction and violence govern the scene, for example כָּלִי (9:1c, 2c); מְשַׁחֵתוּ/מְפָצוּ (9:5b, 8a); נָכָה (9:5b, 8a); הֵרַג (9:6a); מִשְׁחִית (9:6a, 8f); שָׁפַךְ אֶת־הַדָּמָה (9:8f). Also הָעֵיר is an important term (9:1b, [4b,] 5b, 7f, 9d; 10:2e; 11:23ac). Moreover, in 8:5-18 it is the prophet who is brought from one place to the next by his divine guide, whereas in 9:1-11:23* he stands still, watching the path of the executioners and of the Glory of YHWH.

At the same time, there are noteworthy connections between the two parts. As for the semantic field of violence, מָלֵא in 8:17e appears to be a variation of the parallelism in 9:9cd. Both times the context is that of a summarizing

¹³⁸ 9,9cd: וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ דָּמִים וְהָעִיר מִלְּאָה מְטָה
10,4bc: וַיִּמְלֵא הַבַּיִת אֶת־הָעֵנָן וְהִחֲצֵר מִלְּאָה אֶת־נֶגְהָ קְבוּדָה יְהוָה.

¹³⁹ Another occurrence of the verb is in 10:2d where the man in linen is asked to fill his hands with the fire coals.

demonstration of guilt. Cohesion is further created by the above mentioned repetitions of 8:12d-f in 9:9e-g (“for they say, ‘The LORD does not see, the LORD has forsaken the land.’”) and of 8:18bc in 9:5de, 10ab (“my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity”). Additionally, the transition by the echo of 8:18d in 9:1a knits both parts tightly together.¹⁴⁰

Section 9:8-10 may be considered the climax of the narrative as it stands out in several ways: it is the only dialogue, shows a different behaviour of the prophet, and recollects most quotations from previous sections. Furthermore, it offers essential clues for the interpretation of the whole vision. However, its position (neither centre nor end) is unusual for a narrative peak. This has led to different redaction-critical hypotheses.¹⁴¹ Yet after the repetition of the verdict in 9:10, in forwards pointing *x-yiqtol* clauses, the reader would expect further action. In this view, 10:2-11:23* appears as the “last act,” during which, as an extreme consequence of the defilement, YHWH indeed abandons his city while it goes up in flames.

3.3.5 Summary

Ezek 8-11* is structured as both a vision account and a prophecy of judgement. As a proof of Jerusalem’s guilt, the prophet is made witness to the sins of her population. In proportion to the increasing holiness of the place in which they are performed, the cults he witnesses become more and more severe “abominations.” Twice the people’s belief is quoted that YHWH is either absent or that his presence is ineffective (8:12ef; 9:9fg).¹⁴² However, as both the prophet and the reader know, YHWH is still present, and very efficaciously. Through the long description of

¹⁴⁰ These connections are also observed, for example, in Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 193.

¹⁴¹ This is the reason why Houk, “Final Redaction,” 53f. suggests the genuine place of what he calls “altar vision” (10:2-7*) to be between 9:2 and 9:3. There are however no convincing grounds for this speculation. Another proposal is not to count any verses of Ezek 10 to the original account. Accordingly, the narrative would end with the dialogue in 9:8-10 (supported for instance by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 230-232). See arguments in section 3.2.6.

¹⁴² Sedlmeier, *Ezechiel 1-24*, 143, 153.

foreign cult practices, the judgement sentence is meant to appear, despite its severity, as an even-handed consequence of the sins.¹⁴³ It is because the temple has already been defiled that it will be entirely defiled by the corpses. It is because the people have acted as though YHWH was remote and inconsiderate, that he is now indeed abandoning the temple and the burning city.

In this view, Ezek 8-11* identifies YHWH as the real cause of the catastrophe and gives a reason for his wrath – the persistence of cultic sins and, to a lesser degree, injustice.¹⁴⁴ Being a vision rather than an oracle, the judgement is not merely announced but dramatically enacted in front of the visionary’s eyes. The devastation is also interpreted in advance: the real opponent of Israel, the one who will be responsible for its destruction, is YHWH, not the Babylonians. The true cause for the catastrophe lies in disobedience to God.

3.4 Structural Consequences of the Cherubim Redaction and the Wheel Redaction

The enlargement of Ezek 8-11 through the description of the cherubim and the wheels has structural consequences only for the second main part (9:1-11:23*).

While in the original account this part consisted of three sections, now it has grown to five. The first two sections (9:1-7*, 8-10) remain unaltered, except for the insertion of 9:3ab, whereas 10:1-11:23* has been expanded over three sections:

8:1-3	<i>Frame: From Exile to Jerusalem</i>	
8:5-18	<i>Demonstration of Guilt in Four Partial Visions</i>	
	8:5-6	1. The Image of Jealousy north of the Northern Gate
	8:7-13*	2. Seventy Elders in a Hidden Room in the Gate
	8:14-15	3. Women Weeping the Tammuz at the Temple Gate
	8:16-18	4. Twenty Men Worshipping the Sun in the Inner Court

¹⁴³ To put it with Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 200: “Eye-witnessing ... here serves theodicy.”

¹⁴⁴ The “explanatory function” of Ezekiel’s prophecies of judgement is emphasised e.g. by Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 110; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 41.

9:1-11:23*	<i>Judgement and Vision of Glory</i>
9:1-7*	YHWH Gives Orders to the Six Executioners
9:8-10	Ezekiel's Cry and YHWH's Answer
10:1-7 ¹⁴⁵	YHWH Gives Orders to the Man in Linen; Departure Begins
10:9-13	Description of the Wheels
10:15-22*; 11:22-23	Glory, Cherubim, and Wheels Leave the City
11:24-25	<i>Frame: Return into Exile</i>

Table 5 – Structure 8-11 Cherubim Redaction

3.4.1 YHWH and the Man Dressed in Linen (10:1-7)

After Ezekiel's cry (9:8) and YHWH's reaffirmation of the judgement, 10:1 begins with a surprise clause (... וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו וְהָיָה), calling to mind the visionary genre of the overall text. Yet there is no vision account in the form-critical sense¹⁴⁶ since the speech (10:2) and the sight (10:1) are not related; the words are not even directed to the seer but to the man in linen.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, 10:1ab₁ introduces a new section (10:1-7), which contains the original narration of the fire coals and the beginning of the exodus of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה. This narration is now additionally intercalated by descriptive elements, mainly in *x-qatal* clauses,¹⁴⁸ concerning the living cherubim-throne waiting outside the temple building.

3.4.2 The Description of the Wheels (10:9-13)

The surprise clause in 10:9ab introduces a new section (10:9-13) and initiates the description of the wheels. Contrary to the previous section 10:1-7, which was characterized by the alternating of action and descriptive elements, this paragraph uses exclusively background sentence forms like nominal or participial clauses or general *x-yiqtol* clauses, i.e. it is purely descriptive. It explains the appearance and

¹⁴⁵ Verse 10:8 has been recognized as a gloss and does not fit in the structure. It will not be considered here. The same applies to 10:14.

¹⁴⁶ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 239 explains that the recurrence of few form typical elements suffice in this context to signal to the reader continuity of genre.

¹⁴⁷ This structural confusion is an additional sign that neither 9:11 nor 10:1 belonged to the original account.

¹⁴⁸ Ezek 10:1b₂, 3b, 4c.5. Furthermore, participle clause in 10:3a and verbless clauses in 10:1c, 7b.

the movement of the wheels. Like the cherubim, the wheels are subjects of verbs of motion.¹⁴⁹ The identification of the wheels (אֲפֻזָּיִם) with the גִּלְגָּל (10:13) concludes this paragraph.¹⁵⁰

3.4.3 The Departure from the City (10:15-22; 11:22-23)

The next *wayyiqtol* form occurs only in 10:15a where a new section commences (10:15-22). Again there is an alternation between background information about the cherubim in *x-yiqtol* clauses (10:16ab, 17ab) and action: the departure of the Glory from the temple, in *wayyiqtol* clauses (10:15a, 18ab, 19abd; 11:22a, 23ab).

Within this last section, 10:20-22 seem strangely unrelated to their context and retard the exodus of the Glory from the city in 11:23.

3.4.4 Summary

The lengthy description of the cherubim and the wheels – a living throne of winged creatures in replacement of a throne of wooden statues – emphasizes once more the majesty and power of YHWH, along with his independence from the Jerusalem temple.

On the other hand, the overwhelming images draw the reader's attention away to some extent from the transgressions and the punishment of Jerusalem, and even the prophet is almost forgotten during this part; as a result the original point of the vision now occupies a less prominent position.

¹⁴⁹ הָיָה 10:10b; הִלֵּךְ 10:11ac, 16a; עָמַד 10:17a; רָיַם 10:17b. Their close connection to the cherubim is further underlined by negated סָבַב (10:16b).

¹⁵⁰ This is, of course, only after 10:13 has been inserted (see 3.2.3.5; this verse is not part of the wheel redaction).

3.5 Consequences of the Insertion of 11:1-22: Structure of the Present Text

With the insertion of the two disputation words 11:1-13, 14-21, the text arrives almost at its present form, as neither the partial judgement revision nor later glosses will affect its structure in a significant way. Therefore it is not relevant here if the former occurred before or after the redaction of Chapter 11.

The structure is now more complex, though comparable, than it was originally. There are still two main parts, each of which can be subdivided into several sections. The frame has grown to include the final departure of the Glory from Jerusalem,¹⁵¹ comprising 8:1-3; 11:22-25. A third change in location by means of the spirit in 11:1 splits Ezek 8-11 into two main parts (A: 8:5-10:7 and B: 11:1-21), each of which consist of two major sections (8:5-18; 9:1-10:7 and 11:1-13, 14-21).¹⁵²

The description of the cherubim and wheels (10:8-22) could be attributed to part A, as in the structure described previously. However, in view of the symmetry between part A and part B and regarding the form of part A as “visionary version of a two-part oracle of judgement,”¹⁵³ 10:8-22 does not fit in its structure properly; it is better considered as a third element in between the two main parts.¹⁵⁴ Thus the three stages of the departure of the Glory from temple and city (10:4, 18-19*; 11:23) are now spread over three different components of the unit: at the end of part A the Glory moves to the threshold; in the middle part it reaches the east gate; at the end of the vision, already as part of the frame, it has left the city.

¹⁵¹ On the frame in the present form of the text, see Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 192, though the symmetry he arrives at seems slightly overdone. See also Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11,” 156f; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 129f.

¹⁵² Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 192f.

¹⁵³ Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 130.

¹⁵⁴ These structural difficulties are due to the redactional character of this part. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 195 observes that this part is now “in center position.” Similarly van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 205f. In the following he describes Ezek 8-11 as “representative of the rib pattern of prophetic condemnation” (pp. 207f; cf. 207-215).

8:1-4	<i>Frame: From Exile to Jerusalem</i>
8:5-10:7	<i>Part A: Cycle of Visions</i>
8:5-18	1. Demonstration of Guilt in Four Scenes
8:5-6	The Image of Jealousy north of the Northern Gate
8:7-13	70 Elders in a Hidden Room in the Gate
8:14-15	Women Weeping the Tammuz at the Temple Gate
8:16-18	20 Men Worshipping the Sun in the Inner Court
9:1-10:7	2. Judgement in Three Scenes
9:1-7	YHWH and the Six Executioners
9:8-10	Ezekiel's Cry and YHWH's Answer
10:2-7	YHWH and the Man in Linen; Departure Begins
10:8-22	<i>Middle Part: Cherubim, Wheels, and Glory</i>
11:1-21	<i>Part B: Two Disputation Words</i>
11:1-13	1. Cauldron and Flesh
11:1-4	Frame and Quotation
11:5-12	YHWH's answer (5-6, 7-8, 9-12)
11:13	Frame (Pelatiah's death) + Transition
11:14-21	2. Deliverance for the Exiles
11:14-15	Quotation
11:16-21	YHWH's answer (16, 17-18, 19-20, 21)
11:22-25	<i>Frame: YHWH's Departure from City / Prophet's Return to Exile</i>

Table 6 – Structure 8-11 Final Text

Part A corresponds roughly to the original vision account with its above discussed structure: the first half, subdivided into four scenes, is centred on demonstrating Jerusalem's sinfulness (8:4-18). It is followed by the second half, the judgement (total or partial), including Ezekiel's intercession and YHWH's answer as well as the beginning of the Glory's departure from the temple building (9:1-10:7), whereas his leaving the temple area and the city has been included into the middle part and into the frame, respectively.

3.5.1 Structure of the Two Disputation Words (11:1-21)

The newly inserted part B (11:1-21) offers two combined disputation words (11:1-13, 14-21), which are connected to each other and to the context through the recurrent theme *Jerusalem*¹⁵⁵ and through the discussion of judgement measures.

¹⁵⁵ *Jerusalem*: 8:3d; 9:4b, 8f; 11:15; *city*: 9:1b, 4b, 5b, 7f, 9; 10:2e; 11:2b, 6a, 23a.

11:1-21 is split into two sections through the prophet's question in 11:13 and the word-event formula in 11:14. Both sections consist mainly of divine speech, commencing by addressing the prophet as בְּרִי-אֶדְדָּם (11:2b, 15ap) and reporting a statement of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (11:3b-d, 15bc). In both speeches, the messenger formula (11:5d, 7a, 16b, 17b) has a structuring function.

3.5.1.1 The First Disputation Word (11:1-13)

The first disputation word (11:1-13) is framed by the recurrence of the name *Pelatiah* in 11:1, 13. The group of men at the east gate (11:1) recalls the scenes in 8:11, 16,¹⁵⁶ though here the men are not performing any activity. Instead, YHWH quotes a motto of theirs and calls them “planners of iniquity and advisers of wicked advice” (הַחֹשְׁבִים אֶזְנוֹן וְהַיַּעֲצִים עֲצַת־רָעָה, 11:2b). Another intervention of the spirit (11:5a) then marks the beginning of the main section of the oracle, YHWH's answer, which is subdivided into two parts (11:5-6, 7-12).

The first, a demonstration of guilt (11:5-6), with sentence forms indicating past tense, is introduced by the messenger formula. In 11:6a, the theme word “city” occurs, to which all subsequent sections have pronominal references.¹⁵⁷

A second messenger formula + לְכֹן in 11:7a indicates the beginning of the announcement of judgement, which first refers back to the word concerning the cauldron and the flesh (11:7bd), then launches YHWH's response by the introduction of the catchword “sword” (חֶרֶב 8ab). After the prophetic utterance formula (11:8c), the threat becomes more explicit yet basically repeats the previous verses. 11:9-12 contain mainly sentence forms indicating future tense and are characterized by the theme words “to judge” (עָשָׂה לְשֹׁפֵטִי 9c; שֹׁפֵט 10b, 11c), “sword” (חֶרֶב 10a), and by

¹⁵⁶ It is noteworthy that the elements of the typical surprise clause (וְאֶרְאֶה וְהִנֵּה) appear in 11:1cd in inverted order (וְהִנֵּה... וְאֶרְאֶה). Thus part of the description (1d) is included in the *wayyiqtol* clause.

¹⁵⁷ References through the independent pronoun הֵיא in 11:7d, 11a and through suffixes in 11:7c, 9a, 11b. In this way, greater coherence is given to the speech.

another reference to the cauldron and the flesh (11ab). The recognition formula occurs twice and brings this section to a close. The frequent use of formulae within this divine speech is striking. Whether or not the prophesying is meant to directly cause Pelatiah's death remains unclear;¹⁵⁸ in any case it is the death of Pelatiah that provokes Ezekiel to fall down and cry out to YHWH for a second time, as before in 9:8 (11:13c-f).

3.5.1.2 The Second Disputation Word (11:14-21)

The second speech 11:14-21 is introduced by the formula וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר (11:14). As in 11:2-3, the prophet is addressed as בְּרִאֲדָם (11:15a) and a saying among Jerusalem residents is cited (15cd), this time without specifying any particular group. The twofold messenger formula, enlarged by לִכֵּן אֶמַר (16ab, 17ab), subdivides the speech in two parts: a first and shorter one (11:16), mostly in retrospective *x-qatal* clauses, takes up the verb רָחַק (15c, 16c), affirming that the cause of the exile was indeed YHWH.

The second and longer speech section (11:17-21) contains mainly sentence forms of the future tense. It picks up another verb from the quote, נָתַן (15d, 17f, 19ad, 21b), to announce the return to the country (17-18) and the gift of a “heart of flesh” (19-20) for the exiles.¹⁵⁹ Twice a combination of אָנִי + הִיָּה recurs (16, 20), framing the judgement of the past and the promise for the future, which concludes with the covenant formula in 20de. Instead, 11:21 seems to return to the theme of judgement (citing 9:10c) for those who choose to stick to their idols, and finishes the speech with the prophetic utterance formula (11:21c).

¹⁵⁸ The dreamlike character of the text in this regard is strongly underlined e.g. by Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 188f; and James M. Ward, *Thus Says the Lord: The Message of the Prophets* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991), 177. Other authors seem to regard the death of Pelatiah as a real event; e.g. Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 162f; Reto Nay, *Jahwe im Dialog: Kommunikationsanalytische Untersuchung von Ez 14,1-11 unter Berücksichtigung des dialogischen Rahmens in Ez 8-11 und Ez 20*, AnBib 141 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1999); Schöpflin, “Destructive and Creative Word,” 114f.

¹⁵⁹ The verbal form וַתִּתֵּנִי has already occurred once before, in a negative sense, in 9b (“I give you into the hand of...”) and is here repeated three times positively (17f, 19ad).

In point of fact, 11:14-21 is not a reply to 11:13 because the addressee changes abruptly from the inhabitants of Jerusalem to the Judahites in exile; also the occasion causing the oracle is different as it responds to another saying (11:15). Nevertheless, 11:14-21 is to be understood as a positive answer concerning the existence of a “remnant” (שְׂאֵרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל 13f). While YHWH sharply rejects the claims of the remaining Jerusalemites (11:7-12), he affirms he has in a certain way become, for the *golah*, the very sanctuary they cannot access anymore (11:16e: וְיִצְהָרֵי לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט). It is disputed whether מְעַט has here a temporal meaning (“a sanctuary for a little while”) or indicates a degree (“a sanctuary to some extent”).¹⁶⁰ The grammatical ambiguity may be intentional; in any case, מְעַט “functions as a minimizing qualifier.”¹⁶¹ Still, for the period of the exile YHWH remains approachable to his people; abandonment is not the last word. Finally, the promise of a “new spirit” and a “heart of flesh” (11:19) anticipates the possibility of a new beginning, brought about by YHWH, for the “remnant of Israel.” This remnant however, in contrast to the Jerusalem perspective in 9:8, is found in the exilic community, not in Judah.¹⁶²

3.5.2 Connections between 8:5-10:7 and 11:1-21

3.5.2.1 Lexematic References

The first temple vision in its present shape cannot deny its editorial growth over time. Nevertheless, lexematic references between the two main parts (8:5-10:7 and 11:1-21) – in addition to those already observed in the original vision account – give it a certain coherence and unity. For instance, the theme word תועבות, so

¹⁶⁰ Scholars who favour the restrictive sense of מְעַט as “little” or “to some extent” are, e.g. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 190; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 128; Thomas Renz, “The Use of the Zion Tradition in the Book of Ezekiel,” in *Zion, City of our God*, ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 90; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 112-114. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 250 thinks of substitutional forms of worship. The temporal meaning is advocated e.g. by Ruwe, “Veränderung,” 3-18; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 97-99 and translated in RSV and NRSV.

¹⁶¹ Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 350. He also suggests an intentional ambiguity.

¹⁶² Dalit Rom-Shiloni, “Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles and Constructor of Exilic Ideology,” *HUCA* 76 (2005): 8f. and throughout, sees in Ezekiel the construction of the identity of the House of Israel with the exilic community. On this rivalry, see also Section 8.2.2.

important throughout Ezek 8 (8:6dg, 9c, 13c, 15d, 17c; 9:4c), recurs again in 11:18b, 21a. The combination of קרק + מקדש occurs once in each main part. In 8:6de it denotes either a distance of the Jerusalemites from the temple or their being responsible for YHWH's departure from it, depending on how one interprets the infinitive construction. In 11:16ce it turns the concept of the quote in 11:15cd upside down by differentiating between physical remoteness from Jerusalem and distance from YHWH.¹⁶³ Another catchword-connection can be observed in the recurrence of the combination of מלא and קלקל / קלל in 9:7c and 11:6b.

Also the scenes of twenty or twenty-five men “at the entrance” in connection with “east” in 8:16 and 11:1 resemble each other strongly,¹⁶⁴ while the name *Jaazaniah* recurs in 8:11b and 11:1d, although with different father names. Besides, it is precisely the mentioning of the east gate that builds a bridge from the last location of the previous part (the position of the Glory in 10:19d) to part B (11:1a).

Lastly, the prophet is instructed, in 11:15, to refer these words to his “kinsfolk” and “fellow exiles” (אנשי גלות); this command is, in the present text, carried out in 11:25: “And I told the exiles (אליהגולה) all the words...” In the original account, this phrase referred to the entire vision, whereas now the reader would naturally understand it as the prophet's acting out the command given to him in 11:15.

3.5.2.2 Copied Verses

This leads to one of the two most obvious links between the two main parts: the translation by spirit in 8:3 and 11:1. The shorter version of 11:1 seems to consist of all and only those parts of 8:3 which are relevant to its own context. The journey

¹⁶³ Recognizing this reference uncovers a certain irony. “Während sich das in Jerusalem verbliebene Haus Israel von Jahwes מקדש entfernt, ist Jahwe denen, die er entfernt hat, nicht fern, sondern ist ihnen מקדש geworden.” Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 16.

See also Joyce, “Dislocation and Adaptation,” 49; Rom-Shiloni, “Voice of the Exiles,” 16f.

¹⁶⁴ Twenty or twenty-five men: 8:16b; 11:1b; קתה 8:16b; 11:1c. The expression for “east” differs from twice קדמה in 8:16de to קדמוני and קדמה in 11:1b.

“between earth and heaven” is omitted as well as “to Jerusalem” because neither is appropriate for moving within the boundaries of the city. The gate is described with the same wording; only “north” in 8:3 has been changed into “east,” so as to create the abovementioned connection to 10:19.¹⁶⁵ Like 8:4, also 11:1c begins with וְהִנֵּה; thus 11:1cd invert the normal order of the visionary surprise clause.

8:3c-d, 4a	11:1a-c
וַתִּשָּׂא אֶתִי רוּחַ בֵּינֵהָאָרֶץ וּבֵין הַשָּׁמַיִם וַתָּבֵא אֶתִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם בְּמַרְאֹת אֱלֹהִים אֶל־פֶּתַח שַׁעַר הַפְּנִימִית הַפּוֹנֶה צָפוֹנָה ... וְהִנֵּה ...	וַתִּשָּׂא אֶתִי רוּחַ וַתָּבֵא אֶתִי אֶל־שַׁעַר בַּיִת־יְהוָה הַקֶּדְמוֹנִי הַפּוֹנֶה קְדִימָה ... וְהִנֵּה ...

Table 7 – Ezek 8:3-4 and 11:1

The second strong connection is the prophet’s cry of intercession (9:8; 11:13). Its prominent position in the original temple vision has already been examined.¹⁶⁶ The doublet in 11:13 is introduced almost literally in the same way; it addresses YHWH with the same words and is also in its content nearly identical to 9:8:

9:8c-f	11:13c-f
וְאָפַל עַל־פָּנַי וְאָנַעַק וְאָמַר אָהָה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה הַמְשַׁחִית אֶתֶּה אֶת כָּל־שְׂאֲרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁפְכָהּ אֶת־חֲמַתְךָ עַל־יְרוּשָׁלָם:	וְאָפַל עַל־פָּנַי וְאָנַעַק קוֹל־גְּדוֹל וְאָמַר אָהָה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה כָּלֶּה אֶתֶּה עֲשֵׂה אֶת שְׂאֲרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Table 8 – Ezek 9:8 and 11:13

Just as 9:8 is the peak of part A, so 11:13 is the high point and focus of part B. While the similarities reveal clearly that 11:13 has been modelled on 9:8, there are differences as well:¹⁶⁷ the addition of קוֹל גְּדוֹל in 11:13d inserts an element from the context of 9:8, namely from 8:18d; 9:1a. YHWH’s work of destruction is called מְשַׁחִית in 9:8f,¹⁶⁸ while 11:13f employs כָּלֶּה עֲשֵׂה.¹⁶⁹ Both are participle clauses, though

¹⁶⁵ Contrary to Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 50-55, I see the logical tension created by this as involuntary side-effect to the intended connection between the two parts (3.2.1.1).

¹⁶⁶ Refer to Sections 3.3.4 and 3.3.5.

¹⁶⁷ Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 66-68.

¹⁶⁸ The *hiph'il* participle of שָׁחַח occurs 16 times in the OT. It denotes a wilful and violent work of utter destruction, e.g. in the flood account (Gen 6:13) and the narrative on the destruction of Sodom

9:8f is longer than 11:13f, as in the latter the infinitive construction is lacking as well as *כֹּל־* before *יִשְׁרָאֵל יִשְׁאַרִית*. It is not clear if the redactor who authored 11:13 intended hereby to lessen the totality of the judgement. Different from part A, where the position of the prophet's question is unusual, 11:13 is situated at the centre of part B.

3.6 *The Intention(s) of Ezek 8-11*

The first temple vision in Ezekiel addresses in its original account the double issue of justification and interpretation of the imminent punishment. Already the genre *vision account* suggests that what is conveyed in Ezek 8-11* claims to be YHWH's view on the events.¹⁷⁰ In the narrative, it is YHWH who makes the prophet observe Jerusalem's "abominations," quoting the people's false belief in a loss or ineffectiveness of YHWH's presence (8:12ef; 9:9fg) and expressing his anger (8:17-18). Everything is seen from YHWH's perspective. Jerusalem has manoeuvred herself into a position so hopelessly determined by turning away from YHWH that the only possible consequence seems to be her annihilation. According to this vision, the real enemy she has to fear now is YHWH, not Babylon. The deepest cause for the loss of the holy city does not lie in politics but in Israel's disobedience to God.¹⁷¹

In the ancient Near East, the removal of a deity from their sanctuary often resulted from a defeat in war.¹⁷² The account of YHWH's *deliberate* departure is a slap in the face to Babylonian triumphalism and at the same time to any ideology

(Gen 19:13f); it can also refer to human behaviour (e.g. Jer 6:28) or to a savage beast (e.g. Jer 2:30).

¹⁶⁹ The noun *הִכָּזֵב* occurs 18 times in the OT, of which 14 times together with *הָשַׁח*, indicating complete annihilation, usually operated by YHWH. It occurs more frequently in exilic/postexilic authors.

¹⁷⁰ This will be discussed more in depth in Chapter 7.2.1.

¹⁷¹ Although elsewhere in Ezekiel – for example in the allegory of the vine and the eagle, Ezek 17 – the political implications are addressed (so rightly Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 76-100), Ezek 8-11 give an entirely religious interpretation of the imminent tragedy. See Alex Luc, "A Theology of Ezekiel: God's Name and Israel's History," *JETS* 26, no. 2 (1983): 139f.

¹⁷² On this motif and its influence on Ezekiel, see especially Bodi, *Poem of Erra*, 183-218; Daniel I. Block, "Divine Abandonment: Ezekiel's Adaptation of an Ancient Near Eastern Motif," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. M. S. Odell and J. T. Strong, SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 15-42; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 101-169.

proclaiming the inviolability of Jerusalem. YHWH does not hesitate to withdraw his protecting presence and even to command the massacre of his people.¹⁷³

Yet the message of Ezek 8-11* goes beyond doom and destruction. For it is essential that YHWH remains in charge. Despite the historical appearances, Ezekiel proclaims a God whose power and justice are undiminished. Even though all the visible signs and means of worship and faith may be lost: as long as history can reasonably be explained as resulting from YHWH's mighty deeds, placing trust in YHWH is not – thus never was nor will be – irrational or bound to failure. “Ezekiel offers a key to understanding the disaster which had engulfed the nation: this is not, he asserts, meaningless chaos; it is the just punishment of a sinful people by their powerful God.”¹⁷⁴ Thus Ezekiel gives an important contribution to the conservation and adaptation of Israelite faith and identity in the face of the Babylonian exile.

The drama of Jerusalem's rejection naturally attracted the attention of readers and was gradually enriched by many details. Most notably, the idea of the living cherubim throne awaiting the Glory outside the temple building gives still greater dignity to YHWH's exodus from the temple and the city. Simultaneously, this throne of living winged creatures – eventually even equipped with wheels – certainly underlines God's mobility. Even though the temple is acknowledged as his regular dwelling place on earth, this is relativised by YHWH's potential omnipresence.¹⁷⁵

Through the insertion of the two disputation words 11:1-13, 14-21, the gloomy vision of punishment Ezek 8-11* receives a second climax. The unsuccessful

¹⁷³ This does not question the special role of Jerusalem and the temple, on the contrary: “What used to be the center from which God's order was established is now the center of chaos and consequently will be the center of judgment in the restoration of order. The ‘abominations’ pictured in the vision are the worse for being committed near YHWH's sanctuary.” Renz, “Zion Tradition,” 89.

However, once the Glory has left Jerusalem, “Zion ceases to be the place the Zion tradition claims it was.” Ibid., 90.

¹⁷⁴ Paul M. Joyce, *Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 51 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 34.

¹⁷⁵ Renz, “Zion Tradition,” 96; Ruwe, “Veränderung,” 14.

intercession of 9:8-10 is counterbalanced by the parallel scene of 11:13 where the answer (11:14-21) consents to more hope, at least for the exiles. The disputation word 11:14-21 contains two remarkable theological statements.¹⁷⁶ The first is that the exiles are not to be considered far from YHWH because he has “become for them *לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט* (a little sanctuary/a sanctuary for a little while) in the countries where they have gone” (11:16ef), i.e. to some not further explained extent, YHWH assumes the function of the temple and remains accessible even in exile.¹⁷⁷ Secondly, a few verses ahead, 11:19 promises to the same group of people, in addition to their return (17c-f), a “new spirit” (*רוּחַ הַדָּשָׁה* 19b) and “one heart” (*לֵב אֶחָד* 19a), which will be a “heart of flesh” (*לֵב בָּשָׂר* 19d) in substitution of their “heart of stone” (*לֵב הָאֲבָנִי* 19c).¹⁷⁸ Contrary to the message of annihilation prevailing in Ezek 8-11, this anticipates a new beginning as radical as the judgement. The image suggests that the very centre of Israel needs to be transformed so thoroughly that divine intervention is required. Only then will the restoration of the covenant be accomplished (11:20de).¹⁷⁹

In summary: the radicalism of the message of judgement delivered in Ezek 8-11* was mitigated to some extent after the catastrophe had occurred. Its fundamental theocentricity, however, did not lose its prominence throughout the redaction history of the text, but provided the starting point for a new message of deliverance. With Fuhs,¹⁸⁰ we might recognize in the artful composition of the final

¹⁷⁶ These will also be discussed in Chap. 8.2.2.

¹⁷⁷ Ruwe, “Veränderung.” Despite redaction-critical shortcomings, the main thesis of Ruwe’s article is intriguing: that Ezek 8-11 attempts to transfer temple functions and attributes (e.g. the cherubim) directly onto YHWH in order to adapt to the temple-less situation of exile (see especially p. 16). Similarly Joyce, “Dislocation and Adaptation,” 52-58; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 99f.

¹⁷⁸ Compare the parallel text in Ezek 36:26: “A new heart (*לֵב הַדָּשָׁה*) I will give you, and a new spirit (*רוּחַ הַדָּשָׁה*) I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone (*לֵב הָאֲבָנִי*) and give you a heart of flesh (*לֵב בָּשָׂר*)” (NRSV).

¹⁷⁹ “Von dieser Einschätzung des Volkes, daß aus eigener Kraft der Mensch und damit das Volk nicht gut sein kann, ist es nicht mehr weit zu Jer 31,31, der Vorstellung von einem neuen Bund Gottes und der von Gott bewirkten Änderung der Sinne.” Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 1-19*, 67 – but at this point of the book, that moment has not yet arrived.

¹⁸⁰ “Die kunstvolle Komposition verrät die bedächtige Hand eines nachdenklichen Theologen, der auf die Ereignisse aus einigem Abstand zurückschaut und sie im Lichte der Exilserfahrung zu deuten versucht.” Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 49.

vision account the hand of a “pensive theologian” in the attempt of elucidating the painful experience of defeat and deportation.

4. Ezekiel 37:1-14

The vision of the resurrection of the dead bones is, as Ronald Hals states, “by far the briefest of the four visions, though certainly the most famous.”¹ In over two millennia, its daring imagery, which is at once gruesome and full of hope, has never ceased to attract the attention of readers, from early Jewish and Christian theologians to contemporary scholars, preachers, and artists.

Despite the lack of a date or proper introductory formula, the limits of the account are clearly defined by its characteristic topic. The previous unit concludes with a recognition formula in 36:38, and 37:1a begins with the formulaic reference to *וְדַדְּהֵי הָהָא עָלַי* (1:3b; 3:22a; 8:1d; 40:1a₂); whereas the commencement of the following unit is clearly marked by the fresh word-event formula in 37:15.

4.1 Textual Criticism

The textual divergences within 37:1-14 are not as numerous as in the previously discussed vision accounts. A few noteworthy differences are considered in the footnotes to the text in Appendix C.²

Still, the fact should be mentioned that the entire Chapter 37 is located differently in the oldest recovered Greek manuscript, Papyrus 967 (P⁹⁶⁷; dated to the second to third century CE) and, independently, in one *Vetus Latina* manuscript

¹ Hals, *Ezekiel*, 269.

² The marking of divergences through different kinds of brackets in the appendix is the same as for Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8-11: () indicate omission by LXX; < > emendation of the MT; and [] enclose small-scale redactional additions.

(*Codex Wirceburgensis*, fifth century CE). The chapter sequence in these versions is 36:1-23b; 38-39; 37; 40-48. The well-known passage of the promise of a new heart and a new spirit (36:23c-38) is lacking from these manuscripts. Johan Lust and an increasing number of recent authors suggest this to be the original order, while the MT and majority of other manuscripts represent a later edition that required the insertion of 36:23c-38.³ Lust's arguments for a late origin of 36:23c-38 appear quite convincing from the point of view of the Greek text;⁴ however, they do not take into account the redaction-critical pre-history of the text.⁵ Moreover, the logic of the sequence in P⁹⁶⁷ as proposed by Lust and Crane⁶ requires an interpretation of 37:1-14 in terms of the bodily resurrection of fallen Israelites, which is a late secondary understanding. We are faced with interconnected textual and redactional problems,⁷ and ultimately with two text traditions, each with their own inherent logic. To determine which one is earlier is a complex issue that cannot be resolved here. In any event, the impact on the concrete analysis and interpretation of 37:1-14 is only marginal.⁸

³ Lust, "Ezekiel 36-40," 517-533; Silvio Sergio Scatolini Apòstolo, "Ezek 36, 37, 38 and 39 in Papyrus 967 as Pre-Text for Re-Reading Ezekiel," in *Interpreting Translation: Studies on the LXX and Ezekiel in Honour of Johan Lust*, ed. F. García Martínez and M. Vervenne, BETL 192 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 331-357; Crane, "Restoration of Israel," 254-327; Pohlmann, *Stand der theologischen Diskussion*, 127-130 and earlier in his commentary (2001); Peter Schwagmeier, "Untersuchungen zu Textgeschichte und Entstehung des Ezechielbuches in masoretischer und griechischer Überlieferung" (PhD diss., University of Zurich, 2004); and Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 60-65. Also John W. Olley, *Ezekiel: A Commentary based on Iezekiël in Codex Vaticanus*, LXXCS (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 482 seems to agree with this position.

⁴ Lust, "Ezekiel 36-40," 518-525; Crane, "Restoration of Israel," 258-265. See however Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 739f., defending the section's authenticity in the MT. Further criticism on Lust in Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 205f; and Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25-48*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 341.

⁵ For instance, Lust ignores the likely late origin of chs 38-39 while Crane, "Restoration of Israel," 266f. seems to suggest that, in the order of P⁹⁶⁷, there be no reason at all for regarding these two chapters as secondary. Yet without the Gog chapters, the MT follows a consistent line of restoration promises under various aspects, until finally reaching the (visionary) fulfilment of the promises.

⁶ Lust, "Ezekiel 36-40," 529-531; Crane, "Restoration of Israel," 267-269.

⁷ So also, with regard to the question of 36:23c-38, Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 64.

⁸ For example Michael Konkel, "Bund und Neuschöpfung: Anmerkungen zur Komposition von Ez 36-37," in *Für immer verbündet: Studien zur Bundestheologie der Bibel*, ed. Christian Frevel and Christoph Dohmen, SBS 211 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2007), 129 (and again in "Prophet ohne Eigenschaften," 236f.) observes correctly that Ezek 36:26-27 functions, in the present

4.2 Redaction Criticism of Ezek 37:1-14

The literature review⁹ has shown that the redaction history of 37:1-14 is vigorously disputed. A number of scholars who work redaction-critically regard it as a literary unity written by Ezekiel,¹⁰ but at the same time there is not a single verse whose authenticity has not been questioned in the past forty years, and there is a plethora of conflicting ideas on the genesis of this short text.

There are three key areas with possible tensions in 37:1-14. These are 1) the combination of a vision (37:1-10) with a disputation (37:11-14); 2) the irregular use of *w^eqatal* and other issues concerning 37:7-10; and 3) the repetitiousness of 37:12-14. In the following, each of these three matters shall be attended to in turn.

4.2.1 The Unity of Vision and Disputation

The original unity of the vision of the resurrection of the dry bones (37:1-10) and the subsequent disputation word that, in the present text, functions as the vision's interpretation (37:11-14) has frequently been questioned.¹¹ One reason for this is the obvious shift in genre, from vision account to disputation word. A second tension is often perceived in the imagery, as the vision clearly describes unburied bones (37:1-2) whereas 37:12-13 speak of graves.

Additionally, in the past, the syntax of v. 11, the verse which connects both parts, has not always been understood correctly. The alleged syntactic problems with v. 11b_p-c seemed to confirm that the connection was secondary.¹² However, this last

canonical text, as a "*Leseanweisung*" for Ezek 37:1-14. The theme of new creation, which is heightened and universalized in 36:26-27, is however already present within the vision itself.

⁹ Refer to Chap.1.2.4.

¹⁰ For instance Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 505-511; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 888-891; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 253-271. This is to be distinguished from an a priori synchronic approach.

¹¹ Scholars maintaining that both parts are originally independent are, for example, Dieter Baltzer (1971), Frank-Lothar Hossfeld (1977), Peter Höffken (1981), Stefan Ohnesorge (1991), Harald M. Wahl (1999), Anja Klein (2008), and Saul M. Olyan (2009).

¹² A case in point is Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterojesaja*, 101f.

issue has been resolved since Bartelmus demonstrated almost thirty years ago that the verse is grammatically and syntactically perfectly in order;¹³ it does, therefore, not need to be discussed again.

4.2.1.1 The Shift in Genre

The argument that vision and disputation are two diverse and autonomous texts fails to keep in mind that, in the Old Testament, a vision always demands some kind of explanation. Certainly, speech occurs already in 37:3-6, 9, yet there the dialogue serves the dynamism of the vision, stimulating further events that the prophet is to watch; it does not have an explanatory function. Verbal communication that sheds light on the meaning of the visionary events is offered only from v. 11 onward. The vision 37:1-10 is therefore *not* complete in itself because it lacks an interpreting speech part. Even if v. 11a-b is included, the image remains enigmatic and one would still miss a formal conclusion of the account.

Conversely, though 37:11-14 may be taken as a formally independent disputation,¹⁴ the mere *announcement* of restoration for the metaphorically “dead” is by far not as powerful without the preceding *demonstration* of resurrection. Compared with the usual force of Ezekiel’s words, a hypothetical independent oracle 37:11-14* appears half-hearted and feeble.¹⁵ After all, the death sentence for Jerusalem had been announced by means of a visionary anticipation of the execution (Ezek 8-11). Should an analogous vigour not be expected when it comes to Israel’s “resurrection”?

¹³ Bartelmus, “Textkritik, Literarkritik und Syntax,” 55-64. (See also Appendix C, note 10).

¹⁴ As contended e.g. by Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 369, 397-399; Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 310f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 313f. In particular Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 493f. argues for a significant priority of the disputation word over the vision.

¹⁵ The same applies to the suggestion by Mosis, to connect 37:1-3 directly to vv. 11-13b while considering the event of visionary resurrection (vv. 4-10) as a redactional insertion (Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 123-173).

The combination of vision and disputation in terms of image and interpretation¹⁶ can be seen as a creative interplay of the two genres, a creativity that is certainly not beyond an author of the calibre of Ezekiel.¹⁷

4.2.1.2 The Shift from Unburied to Buried Bones

The suspected tension between the vision of a battlefield full of unburied bones in 37:1-10 and the grave metaphor in 37:12-13 neither is a compelling reason for assuming different authors for the two parts. Despite a certain inconsistency, the two images do not, in actual effect, contradict each other. The essential point is both times the contrast between over-evident death and the unexpected gift of life: the bones are long dead, but God will cause them to live. Whether or not these bones are buried has no influence on their being dead; hence this aspect of the metaphor may vary according to rhetorical or other narrative needs.¹⁸ If in v. 12 graves are introduced – perhaps to suit the use of the exodus-tradition verb עלה, or because the opening of the graves better symbolizes the end of captivity – this innovation does not create a real tension to the bones lying “on the surface of the valley” (37:2b).

4.2.1.3 Summary

In sum, there is no need for redaction-critical operations on this general level of 37:1-14. Vision and disputation are best regarded as a literary unity. Both the shift in genre and that in the imagery can be explained as the rhetorical means employed by one author. Moreover, the separation of 37:1-10 and 11-14 (or 1-11b/11c-14) is not

¹⁶ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 888; and again Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 261. “Wer die sog. ‘Deutung’ in V. 11-14 gegenüber der Vision im vorangehenden Text für sekundär hält, bricht der Verkündigung die Spitze ab.”

¹⁷ “Adhering too rigidly to form-critical structures ... may negate rhetorical strategies employed deliberately by the prophet.” Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 371. Likewise, Boadt states “that Ezekiel has broken free from tradition in his use of rhetorical and stylistic devices to achieve this end,” i.e. “to win over his audience.” Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 193.

¹⁸ See in this regard, with different ways of argumentation, Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 221f; Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 138f; Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 144-147.

helpful for a better understanding but, instead, damages the text's rhetorical effectiveness and its formal integrity.

This is not to say, however, that redaction in 37:1-14 is entirely ruled out. On the contrary, we will find that within both parts, redaction has in fact taken place. For greater clarity we shall look at each part separately, beginning with 37:1-10.

4.2.2 Redaction within 37:1-10

4.2.2.1 A Lost Date?

The beginning of a text unit with a plain *qatal* form (הָיָה) is highly unusual.¹⁹ While there are textual variants that might suggest an original הָיָהוּ,²⁰ scholars have long suspected textual loss in 37:1a, seeing as 37:1-14 is the only vision accounts in Ezekiel that lacks a date.²¹ It is not impossible, perhaps even likely, that the vision of the bones originally was dated in the same fashion as 1:1; 8:1; and 40:1; yet on the other hand there is no plausible reason why such a date should have been lost or suppressed.²² Any attempt of reconstruction would be pure speculation. The question cannot be decided.

4.2.2.2 The Use of *w^eqatal* in 37:2a, 7a, 8a, 10a

Perhaps the most puzzling linguistic issue in 37:1-10 is the irregular use of *w^eqatal* verb forms that seemingly express progress in the past (37:2a, 7a, 8a, 10a) – when, classically, one would expect *wayyiqtol*. This observation becomes even more acute through the fact that the same ten verses also contain ten other *w^eqatal* forms

¹⁹ It is unique within Ezekiel; in the OT, the only other narrative unit beginning with plain *qatal* seems to be Jer 24:1.

²⁰ Refer to Appendix C, note 1.

²¹ For example, Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 506f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 891f; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 344f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 283.

²² Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 373 considers that the date might have been dropped “to tie chap. 37 more closely to chap. 36”; but in that case it should have been preserved at least in P⁹⁶⁷ where Ezek 37 follows Ezek 39.

(37:4c, 5c, 6abcdef, 9dh)²³ that are used correctly according to the rules of classical Hebrew, i.e. with a future sense; as well as eleven occurrences of *wayyiqtol* (37:1bc, 3ac, 4a, 7e, 8d, 9a, 10cde). In other words, 37:1-10 features the “simultaneous use of the verbal form *w^eqatal* for two contrary states, namely future tense/iterativity and a progress [of the narrative] in the past tense, which are rigorously distinguished in the [syntax] system of biblical Hebrew.”²⁴ Whereas this problem was either ignored (Fohrer, Eichrodt) or explained with Aramaic influence (Hossfeld, Greenberg), Bartelmus argued at length that to explain this phenomenon while assuming one author only, would mean to accuse this hypothetical author “of schizophrenia in dealing with his mother tongue.” He deduces that 37:7-10 were edited by a redactor whose native language was either Late Hebrew or Aramaic and who, accordingly, used the verbal forms with which he was more familiar.²⁵ However, this point has been proven untenable as there are biblical as well as archaeological examples even for a late pre-exilic use of the alternation of *wayyiqtol* and *w^eqatal* in a past-tense context.²⁶

Nevertheless, the question remains why this phenomenon occurs, in Ezekiel, only in 37:1-10.²⁷ Since, as Schnocks states, “no stylistic or content-related reasons

²³ Additionally, there are nine other correctly used *w^eqatal* forms in vv. 12bef, 13a, 14abcdf. The η + *qatal* in v. 11e is textually very uncertain (see Appendix C, note 11).

²⁴ Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 371. This and the subsequent quotation are translated, in inverted order, from the following passage: “Was ... dem Verfasser der Perikope unterstellt wird, läuft schlicht darauf hinaus, ihm Schizophrenie im Umgang mit seiner Muttersprache vorzuwerfen. Denn bei der gleichzeitigen Verwendung der Verform *w^eqatal* für zwei konträre und im System des biblischen Hebräisch auch strikt unterschiedene Sachverhalte, nämlich Nachzeitigkeit/Iterativität und Progress in der Vergangenheit, geht es ... um die Eliminierung einer für das hebräische Tempussystem wichtigen noetischen Opposition, deren Aufhebung das ganze System ins Schwanken bringen würde.” For Bartelmus’s argumentation in detail, see *ibid.*, 368-375.

²⁵ He is followed in this, in principle, by *ibid.*, 366-389; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 283-298; Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 491-499; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 276-279.

²⁶ Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 173f., with reference to a study by Hermann Spieckermann in 1982 (!). In particular, he mentions a letter dated to the seventh century, an ostrakon from Mešad Hašavyahu (about 20 km north of Ašdod), which shows the same mixture of *w^eqatal* and *wayyiqtol*.

²⁷ Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 374 points out that there is only one other section in the entire book of Ezekiel with a similarly irregular use of tenses, namely 42:15-20 (differently Rooker, *Biblical Hebrew in Transition*, 100-102). Ezek 42:15-20 is commonly regarded as a rather late addition. However, it has plain *qatal*-x clauses, not *w^eqatal* (refer to Chap. 5.3.2.1).

for this divergence from the rules can be identified,”²⁸ it would seem that it solely depends on the free choice of the writer. Then, however, the sudden appearance of the phenomenon would indeed be a valid reason to assume the presence of another author.

It may be wise, therefore, to look at each of the four occurrences individually, in order to determine whether or not their use of *w^eqatal* is indeed contrary to classical Hebrew syntax. For, where the choice of this verb form cannot be explained within its rules, there is a high probability of redaction.²⁹

4.2.2.3 Verse 2a

Bartelmus treats the *w^eqatal* in 37:2a differently from 37:7a, 8a, 10a, regarding it as having a frequentative meaning, and therefore as regular.³⁰ However, it is hard to see any specific reason for this interpretation. Anja Klein is probably correct when she states that the expression *סָבִיב סָבִיב* in v. 2a does not suggest that the prophet was *repeatedly* led around the bones but rather, that it emphasises their quantity and that nevertheless he had to pass *around all* of them.³¹ This seems more consistent with the frequent use of *סָבִיב סָבִיב*, especially in Ezek 40-42.

Yet iterativity is not the only aspect that *w^eqatal* can express when used in a past-tense context: Gesenius mentions a possible durative function of *w^eqatal*, expressing a “longer or constant continuance in a past state.”³² Another grammar explains, “After *qtl* (or *wayyqtl*) representing a situation in past time, subordinate

²⁸ “... dass sich keine inhaltlichen oder stilistischen Motivationen für diese Regelabweichung erkennen lassen.“ Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 174. The above translation is mine.

²⁹ Contra e.g. Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 371; and Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 209.

³⁰ Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 370. Similarly Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 284f.

Bartelmus is criticized for inconsistency for example by Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 152-154; and Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 278f.

³¹ Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 278f.

³² “A longer or constant continuance in a past state is perhaps represented by the perfect with *י* as a variety of the frequentative perfect with *י*.” Emil Friedrich Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, eds., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2nd English ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), §112 ss β.

wqtl represents an imperfective situation within the single event, the epexegetical *w«qatalí* construction.”³³

Applied to v. 2a, this would mean that Ezekiel’s walk among the bones is not intended as a separate *event* in between his arrival (v. 1) and YHWH’s question (v. 3), but as a longer lasting *circumstance*. The prophet needs to be imagined as still walking while the subsequent events are taking place. Given the emphasised vast amount of bones (37:1d, 2b), this only seems reasonable. At the same time, by not using *wayyiqtol* to narrate the prophet’s promenading around the valley, the writer transfers this fact into the background of the narrative: on the same level as the immediately previous and following descriptions in vv. 1d and 2bc.³⁴ The actual thread of the narrative, in the first six verses, consists only of the prophet being brought to the valley (v. 1bc) and of the dialogue there evolving (vv. 3ac, 4a); the rest is backdrop.

It seems reasonable enough to conclude that, in the case of v. 2a, assuming redaction is not necessary.

4.2.2.4 Verse 8a

Since 37:7a, 10a are almost identical, they are best discussed together. We shall first attend to v. 8a³⁵ as its case seems similar to that of v. 2a. It has been argued,³⁶ in fact, that *w^eqatal* is used in v. 8a precisely so as to *avoid* the impression

³³ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael P. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 9th corr. ed. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 533; see also p. 534.

³⁴ It probably has even the same function: to accentuate the vast quantity of the bones, which serves as a backdrop to the impending miracle.

³⁵ It is striking that v. 8a is listed neither in Gesenius nor in Joüon as an example of Aramaic influence; this already demonstrates that the incorrectness of *וַיֵּלֶךְ* is not as evident as for instance Bartelmus implies. Kautzsch and Cowley, *Gesenius*, §112 pp, list vv. 2a, 7a, 10a as examples of *w^eqatal* “due to the influence of Aramaic modes of expression.” Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd English ed., SubBi 27 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 2006), §119 z, have only vv. 7a, 10a (explaining v. 2a as a spelling mistake).

³⁶ According to Stefan Bombeck, “Das althebräische w-Perf. für Gegenwart und Vergangenheit in den hinteren Propheten und den Psalmen,” in *Sachverhalt und Zeitbezug: Semitistische und alttestamentliche Studien; Adolf Denz zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Rüdiger Bartelmus and Norbert

of progress but, on the contrary, to express simultaneity, as though the prophet perceived different visionary events as coinciding, or at least as not as strictly consecutive. Further evidence in the same verse points in the same direction. The desire to describe the events as happening very fast, or simultaneously, is Bartelmus's own explanation for the syntax combination in v. 8bcd, in particular the *qatal* clause in 8c.³⁷

Since there are visually perceptible events both before and after v. 8a, this is comparable to a continuous sense such as in v. 2a. The surrounding events – the composition of bodies out of dead bones – are literally vital for the narrative. The prophet's watching the process, though important, is a fact that can be relegated to the background;³⁸ as can his earlier observation of the great amount of bones (v. 2). This distinction of foreground and background gives the account a marked emphasis on YHWH's words and their effect, while the prophet, despite his seemingly greater activity, remains an instrument.³⁹

Hence וְרָאִיתִי in v. 8a can be explained as a stylistic choice of the writer to convey an imperfective or simultaneous sense: “as I kept on watching.”⁴⁰ Since no additional tensions can be observed with regard to v. 8a, it is assumed to be part of the original vision account.

Nebes, JBVO 4 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), 21-34, esp. 30-33, *w^eqatal* generally has the auxiliary function of expressing “*Stillstand*” (non-progress), often in order to obtain the stylistic effect of simultaneity or an interruption of the narrative flow. Johannes Schiller, “Ezechiel als Beispiel: Bemerkungen zur syntaktischen Struktur von Ez 37,1-14,” in *Geistes-Gegenwart: Vom Lesen, Denken und Sagen des Glaubens; Festschrift für Peter Hofer, Franz Hubmann und Hanjo Sauer*, ed. Ferdinand Reisinger, Christoph Niemand, and Franz Gruber, LiPTB 17 (Frankfurt a. M.: P. Lang, 2009), 115-119 adduces similar examples in Isa 6:3 and Dan 8:7; 10:7; he refers to Ezek 37:7a, 8a, and 10a.

³⁷ Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 378; quoted by Schiller, “Ezechiel als Beispiel,” 116.

³⁸ Renz interprets the syntax of v. 8a as “making the statement point to something outside the narrative movement proper.” Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 205.

³⁹ This is congruent to the prophet's role in the other vision accounts; see Chap. 7.1.

⁴⁰ Furthermore, a construction with infinitive or participle, which elsewhere may denote these aspects, is not viable for v. 8a because it is part of a surprise clause (8ab). As outlined in Chap. 1.3, a surprise clause consists of a finite form of רָאָה + הִנֵּה + verbless clause; it never occurs with a participle or infinitive construction of רָאָה.

4.2.2.5 Observations in 37:7-10

The situation is different for 37:7a, 10a where the syntactic anomaly is combined with other factors that make redaction more likely. To begin with, the two doublets vv. 7ab and 10ab state that Ezekiel “prophesied as commanded.” Usually however, the carrying out of a divine command is tacitly implied; it goes without saying. In the case of a command to prophesy, such an explicit report is entirely without parallel.⁴¹ While the phrase *עשה כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה* is frequent in P, it is rare in prophetic literature;⁴² and it is never combined with the verb *נבא*. Moreover, *נבא* recurs nowhere else in the OT in the first person. Hence the statements in 37:7ab and 10ab are, to say the least, suspicious from more than one viewpoint.

When looking at the section that these two verses are framing, further observations can be made. In v. 7, the narrator’s declaration that he prophesied is somewhat awkwardly repeated by *וַיְהִי כִּי־נִבְאָי* in 7c. The latter, *וַיְהִי* + infinitive construct, is a standard introduction of a new development in a narrative;⁴³ it occurs 158 times in the Old Testament⁴⁴ and three more times in Ezekiel (9:8; 10:6; 11:13). The continuation with *וַיְהִי* (37:7d) is less frequent but it does occur in Gen 38:27; 1 Sam 13:10; and 2 Sam 13:36. If Ezek 37:7ab and 7cde are considered doublets, it is the latter that would be the more natural continuation of the vision account: after the prophet has received the command to prophesy, and while he is still talking, the

⁴¹ The closest parallels to 37:7ab, 10ab are 12:7 and 24:18 where, in the context of a sign act, the narrator states, “And I did [*וַאֲעַשׂ*] as I was commanded [*כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּיתִי*].” Both times this is part of a transition from the prophet’s action to the reaction of the people and, in response, another prophetic oracle. See also Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 163f., though his conclusions differ from mine.

⁴² In the prophets, there is only one occurrence, in Jer 13:5, again in the context of a symbolic action. Examples of *עשה כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה/אֱלֹהִים* in P include: Gen 6:22; 50:12; Ex 7:6, 10, 20; 12:28, 50; 39:1, 32, 42, 43; 40:16; Lev 8:4, 9, 13, 17, 21, 29, 34; 16:34; 24:23; Num 1:54; 2:34; 8:3, 20, 22; 9:5; 17:26; 20:27; 27:22; 31:7, 31; 36:10. The phrase recurs similarly also in Deuteronomy and Joshua.

⁴³ Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 308, 313f. excludes v. 7cde precisely because it introduces a new idea; besides, he believes the miraculous assembly of the bones “[kann] nicht wirklich einleuchtend auf dem Hintergrund der hebräischen Anthropologie der Menschenschöpfung erklärt werden” (p. 314). He overlooks however that, as the bones are a metaphor for Israel, reassembly as the first step of re-creation might not need an explanation at all, against the background of the exile.

⁴⁴ *וַיְהִי* + infinitive construct recurs 28 times in the Pentateuch, 93 times in the Deuteronomistic History, 16 times in Neh/Chr, three times in Esther, twice in Ruth, eight times in Jeremiah, twice in Daniel, and once each in Isaiah and Jonah.

bones begin to move and compose skeletons. While the re-formation of the bones has no correspondent in 37:5-6, it may be seen as the logically necessary preparation for, and structurally as a transition to, the actual resurrection.⁴⁵ As a consequence, in v. 7, only the first three words (7ab) seem to be added by a later hand.

There is yet another problem in the following verses. While we have discussed 37:8a above, the greater difficulty lies in the revivification narrated in two stages by 37:8-10, and this for several reasons. Firstly, as Höffken rightly observed,⁴⁶ this duality does not correspond to v. 6 where four subsequent “vital” gifts are announced: sinews, flesh, skin, and finally breath (resulting in life and then in knowledge of YHWH), with no sign of delay in between any of them. Seeing as YHWH has promised the breath of life to the dead bones twice already (37:5bc, 6de), why now suddenly this “detour” of an additional command? Though some scholars find synchronic explanations for this either as an allusion to Gen 2:7 or as a rhetorical device to emphasise the greatness of the event,⁴⁷ 37:8e-10b break the parallelism between announcement and fulfilment by postponing the gift of breath to a second, separate phase.⁴⁸ Without them, the revivification of the bones (37:8bcd, 10cde) is narrated in precise correspondence to v. 6; except for the fact that the knowledge of YHWH is not mentioned in v. 10.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Similarly Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 289f. Interesting as regards the anthropological meaning of this phase is e.g. Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 205f.

⁴⁶ Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 305-309.

⁴⁷ For example, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 889f; Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 222f; Fox, “Rhetoric,” 11. Alternatively, van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 482f. argues that the two stages underscore the difference between “physical existence and spiritual life”; for Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 377-379; and John R. Levison, “The Promise of the Spirit of Life in the Book of Ezekiel,” in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*, ed. David B. Capes, et al. (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 255, the second stage signifies the reversal of the covenant curse by YHWH.

⁴⁸ With Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 379f. On the contrary, Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 222 sees the problem residing with v. 6a-e; not because “announcement and fulfilment do not exactly correspond” but because the phases announced in v. 6 have “such precision as to create an imbalance regarding the not pre-announced parts of the fulfilment report.” On this point, I find Schnock’s argumentation not convincing.

⁴⁹ Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 308. The observation that *something is missing* at this point is an additional sign that the narrative has not yet reached its end with the completed resurrection of the

6a	I will put (נתן) sinews on you,	And behold, on them were sinews,	8b
b	and I will bring up (עלה) flesh on you,	and flesh had come up (עלה)	c
c	and I will cover (קדם) you with skin	and skin covering (קדם) over them	d
d	and I will put (נתן) breath in you	and breath came (בוא) into them,	10c
e	and you shall live (חיה)	and they lived (חיה)	d
f	and you shall know (ידע)	and they stood up (עמד) on their feet, a	e
g	that I am the LORD. ⁷	very very great army	

Table 9 – Ezek 37:6 // 37:8bcd, 10cde

Secondly, there are further linguistic issues with v. 9. The use of רוחות to denote the four points of the compass (9f) is apparently a symptom of Late Hebrew.⁵⁰ Also the term הרוגי (slain) for the still-lifeless bodies (9g) arouses suspicion to some critics.⁵¹

Thirdly, the prophesying to הרוח (with article) as though it was an autonomous being is unprecedented in the Old Testament. It is true that the narrative plays upon different meanings of רוח,⁵² as the term is used in the sense of breath, or principle of physical life, in 37:5-10 and in the sense of divine spirit in 37:1, 14; however, the fact that the רוח is addressed in v. 9 as an entity able to procure life independently from YHWH (instead of being itself YHWH's gift), is a change in meaning that goes beyond a simple play of words.⁵³ Since YHWH is the giver of life (37:5-6), why would he need to have הרוח summoned "from the four winds" (9f) in order to animate the corpses?⁵⁴ Moreover, the concept of הרוח in v. 9 is too fundamentally different from how it is otherwise presented in Ezekiel. As a consequence, the role of the prophet is altered here insofar as he becomes a kind of mediator between YHWH

bones in v. 10. The "great army" awaits receiving commands, being led somewhere... and it is yet to "know that I am YHWH." This gap is filled only with vv. 12, 14 (similarly Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 747f.). Also Mosis, "Ezechiel 37,1-14," 132f. notices this incompleteness but he interprets it, somewhat precipitously, as a grave tension ("erhebliche inhaltliche Diskrepanz") between vv. 4-10 and 11-12.

⁵⁰ Wahl, "Tod und Leben," 227; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 277 note 547 and, in reference to the identical phenomenon in 42:16-12, Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 236.

⁵¹ For example Höffken, "Beobachtungen," 313 note 23; Bartelmus, "Ez 37:1-14," 383f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 292f; Wahl, "Tod und Leben," 224f; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 277. By contrast, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 890; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 179.

⁵² As observed in particular by Fox, "Rhetoric," 14f. For an inventory of the semantic nuances of רוח in Ezekiel in general, see Block, "Prophet of the Spirit," 30f.

⁵³ Wahl, "Tod und Leben," 225f.; also Bartelmus, "Ez 37:1-14," 382f. On הרוח, see also Chap. 9.2.4.

⁵⁴ The argumentation by Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 744 that the breath/spirit is employed as a helper because of the vast amount of the bodies, is not convincing.

and *קְרִיָה*, as though between two supernatural entities.⁵⁵ It has been said that both of these new concepts are dependent on apocalypticism and on the idea of a personal resurrection of the dead, as developed during the Maccabean Era.⁵⁶ Even if this dating is questionable, especially the connection to eschatological resurrection,⁵⁷ these changes are at any rate indicative signs of redaction.

The sum of these observations suggests that 37:7ab, 8e-10b (and the article with *רִיָה* v. 10c) are a redactional insertion.⁵⁸ The repetition of v. 7ab in 10ab marks the limits of the edited section.

4.2.3 The Original Conclusion

Let's now move on to the second part of the account, 37:11-14. These verses offer an explanation as to the meaning of the preceding visionary events by identifying the bones with the House of Israel, quoting a lament of the exiles.

Apart from the discussion about the literary unity of v. 11 and the introduction of the graveyard imagery in 37:12-13, which have both been already rejected as grounds for assuming redaction,⁵⁹ there is a third area of redaction-critical dispute. Most recent redaction critics⁶⁰ consider vv. 13b₁-14, or at least v. 14, as a secondary

⁵⁵ Der Prophet "erweist sich ... hier nicht nur als Mittler zwischen Jahwe und dem Geist, sondern vielmehr als eine Art Magier, der durch sein prophetisches Handeln außerirdische Kräfte manipulieren kann, was mit der üblichen prophetischen Tätigkeit der Proklamation des Jahweworts ... nichts mehr zu tun hat." Bartelmus, "Ez 37:1-14," 381, see 380-382. From this indication, Schöpflin, "Destructive and Creative Word," 117f. jumps to the conclusion of a late date for 37:1-10 altogether.

⁵⁶ So e.g. Höffken, "Beobachtungen," 313f; Bartelmus, "Ez 37:1-14," 385-388; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 321-324; Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 497f; Mosis, "Ezechiel 37,1-14," 169f; Schöpflin, "Revivification," 80-82.

⁵⁷ Contrary to an interpretation in the sense of eschatological resurrection, Johannes Tromp, "Can These Bones Live? Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Eschatological Resurrection," in *The Book of Ezekiel and its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge and Johannes Tromp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 61-78 evidences that Ezek 37:1-14 was interpreted as concerning "carnal" resurrection only from the second century CE, by Christian theologians.

⁵⁸ Pertaining to those verses, I concur with Bartelmus, "Ez 37:1-14," 366-389. However, I disagree with him regarding vv. 2a, 8a and regarding his dating of the redaction to the Maccabean era.

⁵⁹ Refer to Section 4.2.1 above.

⁶⁰ For example: Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 222f; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 367-369, 386-388; Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 207; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 295f; Mosis, "Ezechiel 37,1-14," 148-150; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 281-283; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 222f.

addition. The main reasons given for this claim are that v. 13b_i is a doublet to v. 12de and that the promise of the divine spirit in v. 14 (which, it is often said, alters again the concept of רִיחַ as used in 37:1-10⁶¹) is dependent on 36:27. Moreover, the repetition of the recognition formula (37:13ab, 14ef) arouses suspicion. While the majority assumes that v. 13ab is the original conclusion of the account, we shall argue that v. 14 concludes the original narrative while v. 13 in its entirety is a gloss.

4.2.3.1 The Two Recognition Formulae (37:13ab, 14def)

First of all it needs to be said that extended recognition formulae, as in 37:13ab and 14ef, are not rare in Ezekiel. For instance, the recognition formula expanded by an infinitive construction (as in 37:13) occurs twelve more times within Ezek 6-39.⁶² Double recognition formulae, i.e. the repetition of the formula in the following or second-next verse, also occur a number of times.⁶³ However, according to Zimmerli,⁶⁴ in all of these occurrences, either both or one of the recognition formulae are actually secondary. In 37:13-14 both formulae are notably extended: the first by a double infinitive construction (13b_i), the second by two verbal clauses (14ef). There is, then, indeed a high probability that the sequence of vv. 13-14 is redactional.

Careful reading shows that it is 37:13 that interrupts the train of thought begun in v. 12⁶⁵ and completed in v. 14.

Verse 14 only is regarded as an addition by Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterocesaja*, 107; and Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 184, 187.

⁶¹ Different from v. 9 the change in meaning is here well within the horizon of sixth century conception. The author intentionally plays upon the different meanings of רִיחַ.

⁶² Ezek 6:13; 12:15; 15:7; 20:42, 44; 25:17; 28:22; 30:8, 25; 33:29; 34:27; 39:28. The combination is exclusive to Ezekiel.

⁶³ Double recognition formula, both referring to the same cause: 6:13-14; 12:15-16; 28:22-23; 30:25-26. The comparison with the previous note shows that one formula of the pair is always extended by an infinitive. Similar examples are: 11:10, 12; 13:21, 23; 20:42, 44; however, in these cases there is a greater progress of thought between the first recognition formula and the second.

⁶⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, *ad loc.*

⁶⁵ "Die unmittelbar an V 12 angeschlossene Erkenntnisformel (V 13) stört den Gedankengang. ... Offensichtlich liegt hier ein Eingriff eines Glossators vor, der in Anlehnung an V 6 und V 12b das Bild der geöffneten Gräber aufgreifen und mit der Erkenntnisformel verbinden wollte, um den Text aufzuwerten." Wahl, "Tod und Leben," 230.

That 13b_i is a plain repetition of 12de is widely recognized as a sign of redaction. It is less common to realize that v. 14 is an integral part of the divine speech. If, as argued above, the promise to the dead bones and its fulfilment correspond in all details except for the knowledge of YHWH, it is to be expected that the transposition of the image into Israel's reality would follow an analogous parallelism.⁶⁶ Of course, it is not sinews, flesh and skin that the exiles need to receive; hence these three elements are substituted by the opening of the graves (12d), the leading up from the graves (i.e. freedom, 12e), and the return to the native soil (12f). The fourth gift, the breath, transmutes into the spirit of YHWH (14a), which however has the identical effect of bringing life (5c//6e//14b). This last element, the promise of the spirit and life as a consequence, – an absolutely central promise in this narrative – is found only in v. 14. The recognition formula is fitting much better, in analogy to v. 6, after the succession of promises is completed, i.e. precisely in 14def. The extended form, along with the prophetic formula in 14g, is readily explained as a stylistic feature to conclude the account with some solemnity.

6a	I will put (נתן) sinews	8b	And behold, ... sinews	12d	Behold, I will open (פתח) ... graves
b	I will bring up (עלה) flesh	c	flesh had come up (עלה)	e	I will lead you up (עלה) ... graves
c	I will cover (קרב) ... with skin	d	skin was covering (קרב)	f	I will bring (בוא) you back ... land
d	I will put (נתן) breath	10c	breath came (בוא) ...	14a	I will put (נתן) my Spirit
e	you shall live (חיה)	d	they lived (חיה)	b	you shall live (חיה),
		e	they stood up (עמד) ...	c	I will set you down (ביח) ... land
f	you shall know (ידע)			d	you shall know (ידע)
g	that I am YHWH.			e	that I, YHWH, have spoken / and I will act
				f	

Table 10 – Ezek 37:6 // 8-10* // 12-14*

⁶⁶ In fact, most authors who consider v. 14 as secondary also deny the literary unity of vision and disputation (see above). One exception in this regard is Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 184, 187; “Death Valley Vision,” 139-142. He defends the unity of 37:1-13, but suggests that v. 14 is a redactional addition, which was meant to link 37:1-13 to the preceding oracle (36:24-36) and to improve the structure. However, to argue for the secondary character of a verse because it has an important role for the structure of the narrative is counterproductive. A second exception is Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 222f.; he affirms the unity of 37:1-5, 6f-13b, but since he excises v. 6a-e as well as v. 14 from the original account there is no parallelism left.

Note that while there is no exact correspondence between the first three elements, the two promises of רינה (6d, 14a) and of life (6e, 14b) are identical. The repetition of the bringing back to the land (12f) in v. 14c may perhaps be explained by the importance of the matter; on a structural level, the phrase creates an *inclusio* because of the shared (rare) verb נוה in vv. 1c and 14c.⁶⁷ Besides, it is not a mere repetition, as נוה has the additional meaning of “to give rest/to settle,” which is more than simply “to bring back” (בוא *hiph.* 12f).⁶⁸

Hence it seems more plausible to regard v. 14 as part of the original account, and v. 13 in total as redactional.

4.2.3.2 The Promise of “My Spirit” in 37:14a and 36:27

Another reason that is often given for the alleged secondary character of v. 14 is that it relates back to 36:24-28, especially through the phrases “I will bring you back to/set you down on your soil” (36:24; 37:12f, 14c) and “I will put my spirit within you” (36:27; 37:14a). This has been interpreted as a redactional effort to increase the book’s cohesion⁶⁹ — a tendency that can, in fact, be observed in many occasions in Ezekiel. However, with reference to the first phrase, the anaphoric connection to 36:24, and cataphoric to 37:21, is much rather accomplished by 37:12f (והבאתי אתכם אל־אדמת ישראֵל) since 14c employs a different verb.

As regards the promise of the divine spirit, it is undoubtable that there is an interrelationship of some sort between 36:26-27 and 37:14, as well as 11:19 and, to some degree, 18:31.⁷⁰ However, in view of the textual-critical problems with

⁶⁷ Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 383 note 83; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 253.

⁶⁸ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 747.

⁶⁹ So for example Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 221f; Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 140f.

⁷⁰ 37:14 ... וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְכֶם
37:26 ... וְרוּחַ הַדְּשָׁה אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם ...
36:27 ... וְאֶת־רוּחִי אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם
11:19 ... וְרוּחַ הַדְּשָׁה אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם ...
18:31 ... וַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם לֵב תְּדַשׁ וְרוּחַ הַדְּשָׁה ...

36:23c-38,⁷¹ it is far from certain in which direction the allusions are going.⁷² Likewise, the redaction-critical status and the date of 11:19 are obscure.⁷³ The correlation between 11:19; 18:31; 36:26-27, and 37:14 would require thorough investigation. Nonetheless, from the above considerations it would seem that, of all four instances, 37:14 is in effect the one that is most firmly attached to its context and gives the least reason to doubt its authenticity.

4.2.4 Summary and Redaction History

Resulting from the above analysis, the original vision account consists of 37:1-6, 7c-8d, 10c-12, 14. It features a scheme of promise – fulfilment – promise, whose elements correspond to each other, while at the same time the second promise (to Israel) transcends the first (to the bones). Against frequent doubts regarding the literary unity of its two main parts, 37:1-10 and 11-14, this unity has, in principle, been defended. Both parts belong essentially together and draw their meaning and effectiveness from the interaction of their correspondence, continuation, and mutual interpretation.

Compared to that of the previous two vision accounts in 1:1-3:15 and 8:1-11:25, the redaction history of 37:1-14 is quite straightforward. The original account told the resurrection process (37:8bcd, 10cde) in parallelism to v. 6. Redaction occurred mainly in one expansion, comprising 37:7ab, 8e-10b. The redactor stretched the process of revivification over two stages, with *קִרְיָה* becoming an almost autonomous being that can, and needs to, be addressed distinctly by the prophet so as to confer life to the corpses. Verse 13, on the other hand, is an independent gloss, which might have been added either before or after 37:7ab, 8e-10b.

⁷¹ Refer to Section 4.1 above.

⁷² For example Anja Klein holds the view that 36:26-27 presupposes 37:14. Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 286; and “Prophecy Continued,” 580.

⁷³ Refer back to Section 3.2.1.2.

4.3 Structure of the Original Vision Account (37:1-6, 7c-8d, 10c-12, 14)

As seen in the previous section, the vision of the valley of bones originally has a parallel structure of two main parts. It is arranged in a well thought-out way, a “rhetorically perfect vehicle”⁷⁴ for its intention. On the other hand, it has repeatedly been noticed that this most famous of Ezekiel’s visions follows the conventions of the genre *vision account* surprisingly little.⁷⁵ The overall form may be described as an extended vision account (which includes a prophetic oracle), combined with a disputation word. It can be represented as follows:

37:1-10*	<i>Vision: The Resurrection of the Bones</i>
37:1-2	Visionary Part: Dead Bones
37:3	Dialogue
37:4-6	Prophecy: Promise of Life
37:7-10*	Vision: Fulfilment of the Promise
37:11-14*	<i>Disputation: The Resurrection of Israel</i>
37:11	Quote: Dead Israel
37:12, 14	Prophecy: Promise of Life

Table 11 – Structure Ezek 37:1-14*

4.3.1 The Vision: The Resurrection of the Bones (37:1-10*)

4.3.1.1 Visionary Part: Dead Bones (37:1-2)

As mentioned, the account begins very abruptly with an *x-qatal* clause. It is possible but not certain that it was originally dated.⁷⁶ Elements which are quite typical for the beginning of Ezekiel’s visions, though not part of the genre inventory for vision accounts in general, are the references to the hand of YHWH (37:1a; cf. 1:3b; 3:22a; 8:1d; 40:1a₂) and to the spirit of YHWH (37:1b; cf. 8:3c) in connection with the transportation of the prophet to another location (37:1bc; cf. 8:3cd; 40:1c).

⁷⁴ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 747. He, of course, refers to the present text.

⁷⁵ Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 377f; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 252, 264-269.

⁷⁶ Refer to Sections 4.2.2.1 and 6.2.4.1.

The first six verses of the vision account are, typically for the genre, divided into a visionary part and a dialogue part.⁷⁷ The visionary part, however, is very short, extending over only two verses. Still more remarkable is the fact that the most prominent element of a vision, the reference to *seeing* (ראה), is entirely absent. It is substituted by three verbs of guidance (יצא, נוה, עבר: 1bc, 2a, all *hiph.*). Though this kind of replacement also occurs in the two temple visions (Chapters 8; 40-43), it is odd in such a short vision account. Moreover, the sight is introduced in v. 1d by a simple verbless clause; i.e. the vision does not begin with a surprise clause. From a purely form-critical point of view, this is not the beginning of a vision report.

Only in v. 2, in the background of the narrative, is the guidance reference (2a) integrated in a surprise clause, as it is followed by הנה and a verbless clause. In fact, so as to underscore the overwhelming impression, there are two הנה-clauses (2bc): the first noting the quantity of bones, the second their desiccated state. Both phrases employ מאד to emphasize their point further. The visionary realm of death is designated primarily by the noun עצמות (bones: 1d, cf. 3b, 4bd, 5a, 7e, 11b_{pd}) and the adjective יבשות (dry: 2c, cf. 4d, 11d). The text's concentration on the opposition of death and life might be the reason why there is no mention here of the cultic impureness of the dead bones.⁷⁸

4.3.1.2 Dialogue (37:3)

The speech part opens with the regular ויאמר אלי בן־אדם (3ab), introducing a question by YHWH. Formally, the dialogue part encompasses 37:3-6, which are a true dialogue, with a question (3b), a first reply (3d), and an announcement that gives an ultimate answer to the question (4-6). The first and the last word are reserved to YHWH whereas the prophet says only one sentence of four words altogether.

⁷⁷ For the formal elements of the genre vision account, refer to Chap. 1.3 and to Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60.

⁷⁸ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 893; cf. Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 287.

YHWH's question in 3b is, in actual fact, a rhetorical question since he indeed knows the answer (as the prophet rightly states). It is a first hint about the events which will follow;⁷⁹ at the same time it challenges the readers to think about whether *they* believe it possible.⁸⁰ While the brief exchange of question and answer in v. 3 repeats the “death” term *עֲצָמוֹת* (3b), it introduces at once two new key verbs that belong to the realm of life: *חיה* (to live: 3b; cf. 5c, 6e, 10d, 14b) and *ידע* (to know: 3d; cf. 6f, 14d). Thus the verse circumscribes the themes and is programmatic for the entire account.

4.3.1.3 Prophecy: Promise of Life (37:4-6)

The prophet's task is not only to observe. The subsequent divine speech begins with the command, both solemn and strange, to announce YHWH's word to “these bones” (4b, 5a, cf. 4d). At this point, a second genre is included in the vision, for the dead bones are to “hear” a proper prophetic oracle; it begins with a summons to attention (4d) and the messenger formula (5a) and concludes with the recognition formula (6fg). Sandwiched in between these formulae is the divine pledge to resurrect the bones (5b-6e), which in turn both begins and ends by promising them breath (*רוח* – another important key word) and hence life (*וַחַיִּיתֶם*; 5bc, 6de). The wording and sentence structure of vv. 5b and 6d is different, however. The latter, being a *w^eqatal* clause within a sequence of *w^eqatal* clauses, presents the breath as one gift of a series, though the most crucial, which directly leads to the ultimate consequence of coming alive. On the other hand, the participle construction in v. 5b

⁷⁹ The dialogue might also be regarded as a literary device in the sense that both the prophet and YHWH know the reality to which the bones refer, but the reader does not. This is suggested by Sabine van den Eynde, “Interpreting ‘Can These Bones Come Back to Life?’ in Ezekiel 37:3: The Technique of Hiding Knowledge,” *OTE* 14 (2001): 157-163.

⁸⁰ “A significant factor for choosing dialogue between God and humans as a literary device was the desire to accent the great gulf that stands between the two parties. What Ezekiel and his fellow exiles thought possible was not what God thought. The listener is confronted with the necessity of choosing for or against the possibility of restoration.” Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 198.

functions more as an anticipated summary than as a climax;⁸¹ it underlines that YHWH's undertaking is essentially about new life, while the ensuing details are a list of means to this end.

4.3.1.4 Visionary Fulfilment of the Promise (37:7-10*)

With 37:7c a new section begins, as is made evident not only by the change from direct speech back to the narrative level, but in particular by the section marker וְהָיָה plus time reference (“and it happened while I was prophesying”). What initially happens is something that has not been preannounced: with a rattling sound, the bones move and join each other to form intact skeletons (7de). In terms of the plot of the narrative, v. 7 can be defined as a transition between the prophetic oracle (37:5-6), mentioned again in 7c, and its visionary fulfilment (37:8-10*), to which 7e is virtually a prerequisite. The key words used, three times “bones” in 7e but no mentioning of “life,” underline that we are still in the realm of death at this point. From another perspective, v. 7 has an important rhetorical function. The beginning with וְהָיָה and the mentioning of a sudden noise calls the readers' attention and arouses expectations, thus increasing the emphasis on the subsequent verses 8-10*.

Verse 8 returns to the genre vision account and in fact seems to start a new section, with the only classical surprise clause in 37:1-14.⁸² Where a surprise clause occurs in the middle of a vision, it usually has this structuring function (see Ezek 1). Yet this is not the case here. The surprise clause marks vv. 7-10* as part of the vision. Its peculiarity, as discussed,⁸³ is the use of *w^eqatal* in 8a, instead of *wayyiqtol*. This keeps the recourse to the prophet's perception in the background, as an enduring condition rather than an action; simultaneously it connects v. 8 more closely to v. 7.

⁸¹ Similarly Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 894; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 286f; and Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 257. In reference to Wagner, Behrens calls v. 5b a “grundsätzliche ‘These.’”

⁸² Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 255, 268.

⁸³ Refer back to Section 4.2.2.4.

Thus v. 8a simply provides a further link from the transition to the actual resurrection without coming to the fore; once again all attention is drawn to the event itself.

The revivification happens extraordinarily fast: the הִנֵּה-clause 8b already states the presence of sinews as a fact; and the growing of flesh and skin (8cd) seems to occur almost simultaneously (note the change to *qatal* in 8c). Once the reconstruction of bodies has been completed, הִנֵּה, i.e. breath, the principle of all natural life, enters them, “and they lived” (10c*d). This process corresponds exactly to the divine announcement in 6a-e.⁸⁴ “The repetitions and detail of the narrative make it impressively solemn; the audience has time to take in the amazing panorama.”⁸⁵ However, different to 37:6, the divine subject is avoided in 37:8-10*; it almost seems as though the bones transform into living bodies on their own account.

The vision ends with the freshly revived people, now called הָיָל (an army/force), standing in the valley (10e). The double הָיָל in 10e creates an *inclusio* to the beginning of the vision where the adverb occurs twice in 2bc.⁸⁶ However, the story seems somewhat incomplete. With regard to content, the reader would expect the people to receive orders, given that they are described as an army. And formally, a vision account needs to conclude with a divine word, which is found in 37:11-14.

4.3.2 The Disputation: The Resurrection of Israel (37:11-12, 14)

Why, then, is it appropriate to see the main caesura of 37:1-14 before v. 11? If arguing merely from the formal criteria of prophetic vision accounts, it might even be plausible to describe 37:1-14* as two vision accounts: 37:1-6 and 7-14.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ See Table 9.

⁸⁵ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 748.

⁸⁶ Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterocesaja*, 109.

⁸⁷ To my knowledge this is not actually proposed by anyone. The closest example is Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 263 who defines v. 8 as “Zwischenschau” but does not find any major caesura in the text. Strangely, he subsumes v. 7 and v. 10 under the speeches although neither verse contains any direct speech. For some altogether different proposals, see Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 128-134; and Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 194-196.

However, three observations on other levels speak in favour of the structure proposed here. The first is certainly the fact that by quoting the Israelites' lament (11d-f) and discussing it, the account moves on to a new genre: disputation word. Secondly, a new theme is introduced as the bones are now identified with the "whole House of Israel" (11b), and the divine announcement (12-14) is now directed to them. These are major changes with structural impact. Thirdly, as evident from the overview, 37:1-10* and 11-14* are corresponding to each other since both initiate by describing a situation of death (1-2 \triangleq 11), followed by a promise of life (4-6 \triangleq 12, 14). The absence of the third element, the realization of the promise (7-10*), in 37:11-14* has (as we shall see later) a specific rhetorical function.

The second part, or disputation word (37:11-14*), consists of a single divine speech. Verse 11 is addressed to the prophet for his personal information; verses 12-14* contain a prophetic oracle that he is to proclaim to Israel.

4.3.2.1 Quote: Dead Israel (37:11)

The *wayyiqtol* of the common speech introduction phrase $\text{וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵי קְוֹנֵי־אֲדָמָם}$ (11ab) shows that the divine speech is connected closely to the preceding vision.

The "bones" are classified, in a very emphatic *casus pendens* construction,⁸⁸ as "the whole House of Israel" (11b_{pb}). By means of this identification, the House of Israel, in its present state, is categorically positioned in the realm of death. This is made even clearer by Israel's own statement (11c-f), a lamentation, which again takes up the two death-terms "bones" (11d; cf. 1d, 3b, 4bd, 5a, 7e) and "dry" (11d; cf. 2c, 4d)⁸⁹ and goes on to mourn the exiles' loss of hope and their state of

⁸⁸ For the grammatical description of sentences with *casus pendens*, see Kautzsch and Cowley, *Gesenius*, § 143 a; Joüon and Muraoka, *Grammar*, § 156. On the syntax of v. 11, see Bartelmus, "Textkritik, Literarkritik und Syntax," 55-64; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 745.

⁸⁹ For a more detailed analysis of the death terms in v. 11, see Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 310f.

separation from, or abandonment by, God.⁹⁰ The return into the sphere of death creates a stark contrast to the living army in the previous sentence. It signals that the story will now repeat itself all over again – not with imaginary bones but with the House of Israel. Therefore, v. 11 and what follows become the translation of the vision into real life. This kind of explanation is unusual for vision accounts; in Ezekiel it occurs more often in the context of sign acts and allegories.⁹¹

The lamentation is introduced by הִנֵּה (11c); according to Greenberg,⁹² this particle is best suited to connect the quotation both to the preceding vision and to the subsequent disputation. In any case, the “transition from the first part to the second is achieved by means v 11,”⁹³ because of the verse’s just mentioned references to 37:1-10*, and because it prompts YHWH’s announcement in 37:12-14*.

For this reason, v. 11 is the pivotal point of the account; it resolves the remaining tension about the significance of 37:1-10* and immediately instigates a new arc of suspense regarding the future of Israel.

4.3.2.2 Prophecy: Promise of Life (37:12, 14)

The relationship of cause and effect between v. 11 and vv. 12-14* is evident in particular from their connection with לָכֵן (12a), which is characteristic for prophetic oracles (not vision accounts). The prophet is now asked to address his fellow exiles (12ab): a realistic, not a visionary, command. The prophetic announcement he is to convey begins classically with the messenger formula (12c) and finishes with the prophetic utterance formula נְאֻם־יְהוָה (14g), preceded by an extended recognition

⁹⁰ “The expression לֹנוּ נִגְזְרוּנוּ may suggest that exiled Judeans, like the dead, are no longer the beneficiaries of Yhwh’s covenant loyalty, that they cannot hope in his faithfulness, that they are forgotten by Yhwh, that they are unable to worship him, and that they will never return to their land.” Saul M. Olyan, “‘We Are Utterly Cut Off’: Some Possible Nuances of לֹנוּ נִגְזְרוּנוּ in Ezek 37:11,” *CBQ* 65 (2003): 51.

⁹¹ For example 4:16-17; 5:5; 12:10-16; 24:20-24 (sign acts) and 15:6-8; 17:11-24; 24:6-8, 13-14 (allegories). Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 192f; Schöpflin, “Destructive and Creative Word,” 117.

⁹² Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 748.

⁹³ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 257. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 888.

formula (14def). The content of the oracle is, again, a series of divine promises. Changing the imagery slightly, Israel's position in the realm of death is now defined by another term that may contain an additional allusion to captivity: graves (קְבֻרוֹת 12de). The assessment of v. 11 is confirmed in that the exiles are “dead”; it is however contradicted pertaining to the hopelessness of this situation. For YHWH declares that he will open the “graves” and make Israel pass from the realm of death and imprisonment to the realm of life and freedom. The latter is signified first in the return to the homeland (12f, 14c) – עלה in 12e alludes to exodus terminology – but then especially in the gift of רִיחַ and life (14ab). The departure from the place of death toward the land of life appears to be the continuation of the vision; the vast multitude (10e) finally has received its marching orders.

It may seem startling that YHWH will confer רִיחַ and life (14ab) only between the arrival (12f) and the actual settling down (14c) in the land. Yet the meaning of רִיחַ is different here, as it is specified as רִיחִי, *my spirit*; it therefore denotes not merely *biological* life (which of course is necessary to move from exile to Judah) but a *divine* life-energy that will provoke a spiritual renewal, which will enable them to live as the people of YHWH and thus to remain in their land in the future.⁹⁴ This wordplay accentuates the fact that the promise to the exiles (14ab) radically surpasses the restoration of the bones, in spite of being near-to identical to 6de.

The reference to the spirit of YHWH in v. 14a also links back to the introduction of the vision (בְּרוּחַ יְהוָה 1b), as does the verb נוּחַ (1c, 14c); thus an

⁹⁴ “Hinzu kommt aber, daß Jahwe aus den von ihm geöffneten Gräbern doch wohl zunächst nichts anderes ‘heraufführen’ wird als – vertrocknete Knochen. Hier erst liegt m.E. das entscheidende ‘tertium comparationis’ zwischen ‘Vision’ und ‘Deutung’: Eine Rückführung Israels ins Land ist – weil das Volk ‘tot’ ist – für Ezechiel schlechterdings sinnlos und undenkbar ohne eine – Israel ‘wiederbelebende’ – diese Rückführung begleitende, grundlegende ‘Transformation’ des Volkes.” Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 434f.

The interpretation by Saul M. Olyan, “Unnoticed Resonances of Tomb Opening and Transportation of the Remains of the Dead in Ezekiel 37:12-14,” *JBL* 128 (2009): 491-501, as “benevolent tomb opening and transportation of the remains of the dead” into “ancestral territory” fails to take into account precisely this aspect. Also the strictly anthropomorphic interpretation as “breath,” argued by Woodhouse, “Spirit,” 18, cannot convince in this case.

inclusio exists around the entire text unit.⁹⁵ Apart from this, and from the accumulation of formulae in v. 14, the account ends without a distinctive conclusion of the kind present in 3:12-15 and 11:23-25.

4.3.3 Structural Parallels and Rhetorical Effects

4.3.3.1 Structural Parallels between 37:1-10* and 11-14*

As observed earlier,⁹⁶ the two main parts of 37:1-14* have many parallels, though with significant divergences. In synopsis, these may be displayed as follows:

Vision		Reality (Exile)	
1-2 3ab cd	<i>Situation: dry bones in the valley</i> וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּוֹאֲדָם Question: will they live? Answer: you, YHWH, know	<i>Situation: Israel = dry bones</i> וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּוֹאֲדָם	11 11ab _p
4-6 4bc 5a b c 6a b c d e fg	<i>Promise of life to the bones:</i> הַנְּבֵא... וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם Messenger formula b רִיחַ + participle (> give רִיחַ) c וְחִייתֶם (you shall live) 6a וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם sinews b וְהָעֲלֵתִי עֲלֵיכֶם flesh c וְקָרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם skin d וְנָתַתִּי בְּכֶם רִיחַ (רוּחַ) breath e וְחִייתֶם (you shall live) fg וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה you shall know that I [am] YHWH	<i>Promise of life to Israel:</i> לְכֹן הַנְּבֵא וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם Messenger formula d רִיחַ + participle (> open graves) e וְהָעֲלֵתִי אֶתְכֶם (from graves) f וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם (to soil of Israel) 14a וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְּכֶם my spirit b וְחִייתֶם (you shall live) c וְהִנַּחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם (on your soil) def וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי וְעָשִׂיתִי you shall know that I, YHWH, have spoken, and I will do it g prophetic utterance formula	12,14 12ab c d e f 14a b c def g
7c- 10e* 7cd 8ab 8b c d 10c* d e	<i>Fulfilment of the promise:</i> <i>bones live again</i> וַיְהִי כִּהִנְבְּאֵי וְהָיָה... ... וַיִּרְאֵיתִי וְהָיָה... (surprise clause) sinews flesh skin breath they lived (וַיִּחִי) they stood (עָמַד) ... very great army	---	

Table 12 – Ezek 37:1-10* // 37:11-14*

⁹⁵ Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 383 note 83; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 253. See however Fox, “Rhetoric,” 14 note 18 against an *inclusio* from יְהוָה יְהוּדָה (1b) to רוּחִי (14a).

⁹⁶ See the redaction-critical analysis above, Section 4.2.

The first main part (37:1-10*) is set on a visionary level; the second (37:11-14*) refers to real life. Both main parts begin by describing a situation of death. In the first part, it is the narrator who describes the valley whereas the speaker in the second part is YHWH. Nevertheless, the situation is always brought to the prophet's attention by divine intervention, since also in v. 1 he arrives in the valley by the "hand of YHWH."

The introductory visionary part (37:1-2) is short in comparison to the speeches; this may be caused partly by the parallelism to v. 11, which would have been disturbed by a longer elaboration on the valley. This disproportion may reflect how much the vision's emphasis is on the announcement of salvation, whilst that, and what, the prophet *sees* becomes an illustration at the service of this message.⁹⁷

Towards the beginning of each part, and only there, we find the familiar speech introduction "He said to me, 'Son of man...'" (3ab, 11ab_P). The dialogue in v. 3 acts as a leitmotiv for the account, as the question is the same in both instances, bones and people: Will they live again? Analogously, the prophet's answer appears more than just a polite, or pious, choice of words: YHWH *knows*, just as knowledge of YHWH will be the ultimate consequence of what YHWH is about to do (6fg, 14def).

It has already been noticed that v. 6 (the promise of life to the bones) and vv. 8-10* (the coming to life of the bones) are very much parallel.⁹⁸ The introduction of the divine speech containing this promise (vv. 4-5), however, has its corresponding part only later in v. 12; and the recognition formula of v. 6fg matches that of v. 14de. The two promises themselves are couched in the same sentence structure (sequence of *w^eqatal* clauses, prevalently in first person singular). While the actual content differs in vv. 6abc/12ef, according to the object in question, the verb עלה appears

⁹⁷ This is argued by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 266.

⁹⁸ See Tables 9 and 10.

equally in vv. 6b, 8c and 12e, and the wording is almost literally identical in vv. 6de, 14ab. The only variance here is the personal suffix that makes the change from the biological principle of life (רִיחַי 6d) to the divine spirit (רִיחַי 14a). Obviously, a renewed mindset is as essential for Israel's new life as is the return to the land, if it is not in fact the more important aspect.

4.3.3.2 Rhetorical Effects

Perhaps the first consequence of the analogy between Israel and the bones is that Israel is confirmed to be “dead” and far beyond all hope as much as natural possibilities are concerned. This implies that the people cannot do anything to change their own situation or even to deserve YHWH's help – just as lifeless bones cannot do this. The initiative, as well as the competence, lies with YHWH alone who, as the Creator-God, has the power to raise dead matter to life.⁹⁹

Secondly, against the background of the marked parallelisms it is readily appreciable that there is no corresponding section to 37:7-10*. The resurrection of Israel is announced, but not narrated. Expressed in a schematic way, the narrative has the format *abc-a'b'*, whereby *a* is the visionary situation of death, *b* the dialogue part including a prophetic oracle, and *c* its visionary realization. Analogously, *a'* is the real situation of (metaphoric) death and *b'* is the responding prophetic oracle. In this sequence, an element *c'* is expected but missing. Perhaps this “open ending” makes the rhetoric of the account all the more powerful. YHWH promises to restore to life a

⁹⁹ “Ezechiel verkündet mit seiner Vision die Auferstehung des vernichteten Israel oder genauer ausgedrückt: er sagt die Neuerschaffung des ausgelöschten Volkes an. Jahwes Wirken endet nicht mit der Katastrophe. Er setzt ohne Motiv und nähere Begründung einen völlig neuen Anfang.“ Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 398. In a similar vein, Klein, *Israel in Exile*, 84 defines the “radical dependency on God for any future hope” as the “major theme of this passage.” Lapsley states, “The language of creation, ... which saturates Chapters 36 and 37, makes sense only when it is understood that, for Ezekiel, human identity and the land itself have been wiped away. Now they are to be unilaterally re-created by God, but from the same ‘stuff’ of the old Israel, ... from the very same bones of the people.” Jacqueline E. Lapsley, “Ezekiel,” in *WoBC: Revised and Updated*, ed. Carol A. Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 285.

field of dead and dry bones and immediately demonstrates that he is indeed able to perform this miracle. Hence when YHWH assures the same to his metaphorically dead people, the intended conclusion is the firm expectation that Israel's re-creation will take place, and soon. The account is open-ended because it is to be completed in history. It "depicts the extreme case of unpredictable salvation in order to enable the people to expect a salvation that though unlikely is yet less radical, the return of the nation from exile."¹⁰⁰ By way of its form and content, the text aims to instil this hope in its readers.¹⁰¹

This also means that, contrary to both Rabbinic and Early Christian interpretation,¹⁰² the original version of Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones does not explicitly deal with the question of afterlife. Its focus is entirely this-worldly and centred on the restoration of the exiles: "the vision refers to the present state of the living, not to the future state of the dead."¹⁰³

4.4 Structure of the Present Text (37:1-14)

The redaction-critical analysis found two insertions by later editors: 37:13 and 37:7ab, 8e-10b + -ו in 10c. Linguistic indications suggested a post-exilic date for the latter, whilst v. 13 was probably added to the text by another person. Although these are, technically, two stages of redaction, the effect of v. 13 on structure and content of the account is minimal; hence we can immediately proceed to discussing the final text.

The overall structure of 37:1-14, with its two main parts, has remained widely intact. What has been altered by the redaction is that the sequence of prophecy and

¹⁰⁰ Fox, "Rhetoric," 11f.

¹⁰¹ For a contrary, negative interpretation, see Baruch J. Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View of Israel's Restoration," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 59.

¹⁰² On Rabbinic and Early Christian interpretation, see e.g. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 749-751.

¹⁰³ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 397; similarly also Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 900.

fulfilment of the promise to the dry bones now occurs twice. The process of restoration is thus noticeably extended (see overview below).

37:1-10	<i>Vision: The Resurrection of the Bones</i>
37:1-2	Visionary Part: Dead Bones
37:3	Dialogue
37:4-6	Prophecy I: Promise of Life to the Bones
37:7-8	Vision: Fulfilment I: Composition of Bodies
37:9	Prophecy II: to the Spirit
37:10	Vision: Fulfilment II: Arrival of “the Spirit”
37:11-14	<i>Disputation: The Resurrection of Israel</i>
37:11	Quote: Dead Israel
37:12-14	Prophecy III: Promise of Life to Israel

Table 13 – Structure 37:1-14 Final Text

This modification brings with it also consequences for the perception of other sections and of the narrative structure as such. We shall discuss in the following only those sections that are affected by the changes.

4.4.1 Structural Consequences to the Vision (37:1-10)

4.4.1.1 The First Prophecy and the Composition of Bodies (37:4-6, 7-8)

The account of the word-by-word fulfilment of YHWH’s promise to the dry bones is interrupted and segmented in two stages: sinews, flesh, and skin (8bcd) on the one hand, and breath on the other (v. 10). Moreover, the breath/spirit is singled out by a second prophecy (v. 9).

The first prophecy in 37:4-6 is directed “to these bones” (4b). The delivery of the oracle by the prophet is now explicitly narrated (7ab). It comes true partially in v. 8, but v. 8e (וְרִיחַ אֵין בָּהֶם) gives an unexpected turn to the story: the main points of the promise, רִיחַ and life (5bc, 6de), are still missing; the revival has come to a halt. Though having performed a great miracle, YHWH’s word has produced only lifeless corpses. This surprising outcome indubitably calls for the readers’ attention.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ See in this regard the insightful considerations in Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 206f.

4.4.1.2 The Second Prophecy and the Spirit (37:9-10)

A second divine word is addressed to the prophet. This time, he is to prophesy to the breath/spirit (הַרִיחַ, with article). Verse 9 is structured comparably to vv. 4-5 and 12:¹⁰⁵

Prophecy I		Prophecy II		Prophecy III	
4a	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי	9a	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי		
b	Prophesy (הַנְּבִיא) to these bones	b	Prophesy (הַנְּבִיא) to the breath/spirit	12a	Therefore prophesy (הַנְּבִיא)
c	וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם	c	prophesy (הַנְּבִיא) son of man	b	וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם
d	summons to attention	d	וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־הַרוּחַ	c	messenger formula
5a	messenger formula	e	messenger formula	d	וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי + participle
b	וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי + participle (> I give רוּחַ)	f	come O breath,		(> I open graves)
c	you shall live (וְחַיִּיתֶם)	g	breathe on these slain		...
		h	they may live (וְיָחִיִּי)	[14b	you shall live (וְחַיִּיתֶם)]

Table 14 – Ezek 37:4-5 // 37:9 // 37:12

The greatest similarities are at the beginning, as both the first and the second prophecy commence with “And he said to me, ‘Prophesy to ... and you shall say to ...’” (4abc, 9abd, cf. 12ab),¹⁰⁶ followed by the messenger formula (5a, 9e, 12c). The duplication of the command in 9c is a first minor difference; yet it is the message that particularly sets the two prophecies apart. For v. 5 and v. 12 contain, couched in a participle clause, an announcement about something YHWH will do to the addressee of the oracle (“Behold, I am about to ...” 5b, 12d), which is then further developed in first-person *w^eqatal* clauses (6, 12ef). The second oracle, by contrast, does not announce anything but instead requires an action of its addressee, as evidenced by the imperatives in 9fg. The addressees will live not by God’s direct intervention (“you will live” 5c, 14b) but the involvement of a third party, which will bring life to *them* (9h).

¹⁰⁵ For another comparison, see Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 130f.

¹⁰⁶ The immediate sequence of וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי and נְבִיא occurs only here in Ezekiel. The most similar instance is 11:4-5 “Therefore prophesy against them (הַנְּבִיא עֲלֵיהֶם); prophesy, son of man. ... and he said to me, ‘Say (אָמַר): Thus says the LORD...’” The combination of נְבִיא imperative, וְאָמַרְתָּ, and messenger formula recurs other ten times (13:2; 21:[14,] 33; 30:2; 34:2; 36:1-2, 3, 6; 38:14; 39:1).

From this point of view, the process of restoration is not only delayed in the final form of 37:1-10 but it is also rendered more complicated due to the introduction of an additional instance that needs to give its own contribution to the procedure.¹⁰⁷ All this is part of the retarding element initiated with v. 8e.

The tension and expectation provoked in the reader by this protraction is finally dissolved in v. 10. As in v. 7, the prophet reports that he did as commanded; as a result of his prophesying, the breath/spirit comes and revives the corpses. Instead of massacred bodies, a powerful army fills the valley. Though the description is short and without particular embellishments, the revivification of the former bones is the climax of the first main part. The delay in the accomplishment of the resurrection puts an even stronger emphasis on this first peak.¹⁰⁸ The openness of the vision (what is the army supposed to do?) comes less into evidence. It may be argued that the heightened prominence of v. 10 distracts from the original pivot v. 11.

4.4.2 Structural Consequences to the Disputation (37:11-14)

Through the increased rhetorical tension in 37:8-10, the focus of the vision becomes more centred on the actual fulfilment of the divine announcement to the bones. As the process of restoration receives more attention – and also greater length in words – the older underlying tension, namely the question of the significance of the vision, which is dissolved only with v. 11, is to some extent put in the shade. Nonetheless, v. 11 retains its essential function of connecting the two main parts.

¹⁰⁷ This emphasised autonomy of “the Breath/Spirit” in v. 9 speaks against an all too simplistic explanation of the two-stage restoration in Ezek 37:4-10 with the two-stage creation of mankind in Gen 2:7. In the Genesis story, it is YHWH-God who himself breathes “life-breath” (נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים) into Adam’s nostrils; no third party is summoned to do so, and the term רוּחַ is absent. While an allusion to Gen 2:7 is likely in Ezek 37:4-10, the parallel is by no means sufficient to explain by it all the problems posed by v. 9 (contra e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 889f; Garscha, *Studien zum Ezechielbuch*, 222; Hals, *Ezekiel*, 269; Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 225f; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 209).

¹⁰⁸ For Fox, “Rhetoric,” 10f. (and Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 136f.), the retarded restoration resembles the actions of a stage magician – increasing the tension makes the magician appear more masterful. Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 199, compares it to the plague narrative in Ex 7-11. I am not convinced by the analogies he finds in Ezek 34 and 38-39, which would create “a series of delayed tensions” (p. 200).

The prophetic oracle to be delivered to Israel (37:12-14) is now the third speech of this kind,¹⁰⁹ not the second as in the original account. This means that the direct parallelism between 37:4-6 and 12-14 as observed in Section 4.3.3 is broken up by v. 9, in a similar way as the correspondence of promise and fulfilment in vv. 5-6 and 8. Two speeches in 37:1-10 are juxtaposed to one speech in 37:11-14.

However, through the insertion of v. 13 and its extended recognition formula, the oracle seems, despite its brevity, to consist of two parts: 37:12-13 and 37:14. This leads to the impression that the restoration of Israel is also announced in two stages: first liberation and return to the homeland (37:12-13), and then infusion of YHWH's spirit (v. 14). Only once the second stage is completed will Israel really live (14b).¹¹⁰ In this view, the correlation between the two main parts is restored, as the visionary two-part restoration of the bones (vv. 4-8, 9-10) corresponds, if only roughly, to the announced two-part restoration of Israel (vv. 12-13, 14).

At the same time, this stretching conveys the "distinct impression that the process of revitalization is not a simple one; the life-giving procedure takes its time."¹¹¹ "The process of recreation is a protracted one, and Israel should not expect their tears to be turned to joy overnight."¹¹²

4.5 The Intention of 37:1-14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of the dry bones in its original version (37:1-6, 7c-8d, 10c-12, 14) is a powerful, and rhetorically elaborate, message of hope beyond reason. The short narrative has two apparently diverse parts, a vision account and a disputation word but it also includes prophetic oracles in both parts. These three

¹⁰⁹ See Table 14 above.

¹¹⁰ For example Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 261, 268 sees here the central message of 37:1-14: life depends pre-eminently on the spirit, more than on physical integrity or on the return to the land.

¹¹¹ Levison, "Spirit of Life," 248. He refers to several texts, not only 37:1-14.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 253f.

genres work together in the text's effort to convince Israel that it will "live again." The vision's initially shocking imagery describes the seemingly impossible: a vast number of long-dead bones that, hearing the word of YHWH, immediately reconstitute bodies and turn into a living "very very great army." The disclosure that the bones are actually a symbol for exilic Israel (v. 11) probably was of little surprise to contemporary readers. But if they followed the plot of the vision, they are virtually forced, then, to accept the consequence: if YHWH is capable of restoring desiccated bones to life, and if Israel is "cut off" and "dry bones," then YHWH is capable of restoring Israel as well. The vision is not an end in itself but serves as a rhetorical reinforcement of the message.

The equation of the exiles with dry bones fully acknowledges the severity of their condition: it is striking that YHWH does not negate, but on the contrary emphasises, that his people as such is dead. The message of salvation stands therefore not in contrast but in continuation to the previous messages of judgement (Ezek 8-11). Israel did die, yet YHWH can make it live again.

The act of restoration (37:12, 14) consists of Israel's liberation from their "graves," their return to Judah, and the gift of YHWH's own spirit; in other words, the renewal of political independence and of Israel's privileged relationship with YHWH – both implicitly deemed impossible in the lament of v. 11. No more details are given as to how or for what reason YHWH will bring this about. In particular, no contribution is expected, or possible, on the part of Israel. Through the structural parallels between the vision of the bones and the announcement to Israel, and through the openness of the account, which does not narrate the fulfilment of that announcement, the impression arises that the restoration is expected to take place almost immediately, soon, in the very near future.

In fact, this might be one reason why an editor, from the perspective of later historical experience, considered it necessary to insert retarding elements into the text (i.e. 37:8e-10b). While various interpretations of the two-stage resurrection are possible, one reading is that it is more suitable to efficiently convey hope, precisely because it takes into account the experience of delay. “By affirming that a second step will complete what was lacking after the first step, the text claims that Yahweh will bring about what he promised, in spite of the ineffectiveness experienced so far.”¹¹³

Furthermore, the final text of 37:1-14 gives a far more prominent role to the רִיחַ, since now the bones are revived by the quasi-personal spirit and not simply by receiving natural breath. Consequently, there is a more pronounced notion that mere physical restoration is not sufficient, but that the essential part is a spiritual renewal. Also the play on the different meanings of רִיחַ is developed further, moving from the natural life-principle (רִיחַ) to a hypostatic supernatural force (קְרִיחַ) and finally to the divine spirit (רוּחַי).¹¹⁴

The redacted text focuses generally more on the vision (37:1-10), and thus less on the application to exiled Israel (37:11-14). The vision seems to exist more in its own right, rather than illustrating the second part, as before. Its daring imagery certainly assured the enduring fascination of readers throughout the centuries with this shortest, and perhaps most impressive, vision account of Ezekiel.

¹¹³ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 207. Renz works on a synchronic level but his interpretation supplies a good motivation for the redactional addition of vv. 8e-10b. Whereas Renz applies this experience of “ineffectiveness,” on the subsequent pp. 207-209, to Ezekiel’s failure to make the people believe in his words as those of a prophet, one could apply it more directly to the experience of delay in YHWH’s help.

¹¹⁴ Fox, “Rhetoric,” 14f; Boadt, “Dramatic Structure,” 203f; Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 82f. See also Chap. 9.2.4.

5. Ezekiel 40-48

In their present arrangement, the last nine chapters of the book of Ezekiel undoubtedly are meant to be understood as one great vision account. The fresh, solemn date in 40:1 and the translocation of the prophet once again to Jerusalem (“the city” as it is called here) very clearly mark the beginning of a new literary unit. The setting of a visionary exploration of the new temple, with all the cultic and social ordinances it generates, is implied, and periodically called to mind, throughout Ezek 40-48. There is no concluding report about the prophet’s return into exile.

5.1 *Preliminary Note: Limits of the Present Study*

The analysis of this second temple vision in Ezekiel presents even more multifaceted issues than those of Ezek 1:1-3:15 and 8-11. For instance, the large amount of text (more than 3,000 words), and the design and structure of the whole may not be immediately perceptible; moreover, the often extremely repetitious or legalistic style can be confusing to the reader. In fact, it would take another thesis specifically on Ezek 40-48 to adequately cover the great workload necessary to engage in depth with this great quantity of complex text.¹

Yet, not all of the material within Ezek 40-48 can truly be defined as visionary, since these chapters also include long sections of law texts as well as architectonic and geographical descriptions, which do not feature any of the essential elements for the genre vision account.² As the focus of this thesis is specifically on vision accounts, it will be restricted to only those portions of text that are proper formal vision accounts. Practically, attention shall be limited to: 40:1-4 (which in effect

¹ Investigations on Ezek 40-48 as a whole have been performed, under various perspectives and sometimes in meticulous detail, for example by the following authors: Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*; Zimmerli, “Planungen”; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*; Levenson, *Theology*; Tuell, *Law of the Temple*; Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*; Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*.

² So also e.g. Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 127.

extends the perception as a vision over most of Chapters 40-42); 43:1-12; 44:1-2, 4-6; 47:1-12.³

5.2 Textual Criticism

The textual situation of Ezek 40-48 on the whole is complicated. Not only does the large amount of text lead almost unavoidably to a greater amount of variants, but in addition the LXX often seems to either follow a different *Vorlage* or to translate at any rate much freer than in previous chapters of the book, offering sometimes a shorter, sometimes a longer version, and sometimes what seems to be a different text altogether.⁴ There are also differences among the Greek witnesses, for instance regarding the translation of Ezekiel's preferred form of the divine name, יהוה יהוה; while the Codex Vaticanus (LXX^B) renders it, within Chapters 40-48, as κύριος [ὁ] θεός, the older Papyrus 967 (P⁹⁶⁷) has only a simple κύριος.⁵ Additionally, the Hebrew of the MT is very difficult, as architectonic or cultic *termini technici* abound as well as grammatical problems and scribal errors such as miswritings (for example in 40:38a, 44a; 41:1c, 8a, 15c) or incorrect word order (for example in 43:11c; 47:2b, 15b). As a consequence, it is not possible here to offer a comprehensive textual-critical discussion. This work has already been done extensively by scholars like Hartmut Gese, Walther Zimmerli,⁶ and the older commentaries before them. More recently, Michael Konkel's study⁷ on Ezek 40-48 summarizes well the scholarly positions on each textual question within the Second Temple Vision. Older

³ Refer back to Chap. 1.3. Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 36 note 10 considers within Ezek 40-48 only 43:1-9 as a formal vision account; he seems to overlook that the criteria established by him apply to all four texts listed above. (The only other section that also takes up elements of the guidance vision is the description of the kitchens in 46:16-24.)

⁴ Examples for this are 40:43b; 42:5b, 14, 16-19; 43:2; 44:5-9. If LXX had a different *Vorlage* in these cases, then it is not necessarily older than that of the MT. The latter remains the reference text.

⁵ On this question, see Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1253-1258.

⁶ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 980-1236. Of the newer commentaries in English, especially Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*; and Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48* apply textual criticism.

⁷ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen* (revised doctoral thesis, Bonn University, Germany, 2000).

commentators tended to make manifold corrective interventions in the MT, whether because of different readings of the versions or due to apparently incorrect Hebrew. Newer studies, beginning with Gese and even more so Konkel, are less easily disposed to emendations, which however have to remain a last option.

Limiting the textual-critical considerations of this thesis to Ezek 40:1-43:11; 44:1-5; 47:1-12, it will agree to a great extent with Konkel's suggestions. Significant textual variations are marked in the text in Appendix D.⁸ Here, only a few issues of special importance shall be considered.

In 40:2c, LXX translates ἀπέναντι (on the opposite side), which would point to the consonants מנגד in its Hebrew *Vorlage*, instead of MT מנגב (toward the south). This reading appears to be supported by the fact that within Chapters 40-42 the expression for "south" is דרום, not נגב. However, as will become clear in the redaction-critical analysis, most of 40:2 is a later insertion. Gese⁹ already arrived at this conclusion for the direction "toward the south" and affirmed that the MT preserves the older version of the gloss.

Secondly, there is no evidence in LXX of the repetition of מרצה in 43:3a₁d MT (וּבְמַרְצָה הַמַּרְצָה; plus another פְּמַרְצָה in the same verse and three times רָצִיתִי); often commentators suspect dittography.¹⁰ However, the awkward pleonastic wording in 43:3 could also be explained, with Konkel, as a rhetoric figure expressing the "letzte Steigerung in der Zurücknahme der Sprache angesichts des visionären Erlebens."¹¹ While the question cannot be decided with certainty this does not seriously influence the interpretation.

⁸ As in the previous texts, omissions of portions of text in LXX are marked by () and emendations of the MT by < > while glosses in terms of redaction criticism are indicated by [].

⁹ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 10f; adopted e.g. by Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 983; and Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 28.

¹⁰ For example Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 242.

¹¹ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 72; similarly Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 574.

In 43:3c, the suffix of **יבבִּי** in the first person singular (when *I* came to destroy), which is represented also in LXX, is probably to be understood as a euphemism, avoiding the statement that YHWH destroyed the city.¹² In this view, there is no need to alter the MT. The same applies for the Greek alternative *χρῖσαι* (to anoint) for MT **לְשַׁחֵת** (to destroy).

Throughout 44:5-9, the wording of LXX differs considerably from MT, without however substantially altering the meaning. It is uncertain if LXX depends on a different *Vorlage* or simply paraphrases freely. Even in the case that LXX had a different *Vorlage*, this would probably not be older than that of the MT, which remains the reference text.¹³

In the vision of the river in 47:1-12, the textual divergencies are few, and mostly linked to difficulties in the Hebrew (see Appendix D). Interestingly though, in the Greek version of 47:3-6, it is only the guide who passes through the water, not the prophet. There is no need to adjust the MT.¹⁴

5.3 Redaction Criticism of Ezek 40-42; 43:1-12; 44:1-5; 47:1-12

5.3.1 A Working Hypothesis

Similar to the two other larger vision accounts in the book, the last and longest vision in Ezek 40-48 owes its present appearance to a complex redaction history.¹⁵ This thesis cannot endeavour to offer a new approach to the redaction history of Ezek 40-48. As stated above, the discussion will concentrate on Ezek 40-42; 43:1-12; 44:1-5; 47:1-12, so as to establish their redactional layers and their place in the

¹² Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 72.

¹³ For a summary, see *ibid.*, 99-101; for more details, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1114, 1119f.

¹⁴ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 194.

¹⁵ The complexity is such that for example Paul Joyce states, “On the issue of authorship and redaction within chaps. 40-48, the most appropriate stance is one of responsible agnosticism.” Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 219.

redaction history of Ezek 40-48. This narrow focus obviously needs an overall idea of the redaction history of Ezek 40-48 as a working hypothesis, to be modified whenever appropriate. Among the most recent overall redaction models, this thesis will by and large adopt the one proposed by Michael Konkel (2001),¹⁶ which draws, among others, on the fundamental work done by Hartmut Gese and Walther Zimmerli. While the approaches of all three authors have been outlined in the literature review,¹⁷ it will be helpful to recapitulate Konkel's ideas at least briefly before moving on to the actual redaction criticism.

Konkel's redaction criticism of Ezek 40-48 is based on detailed textual, synchronic and diachronic analyses of small pieces of text at a time. In synthesis, Konkel defines an original layer (*Grundschrift*) and proposes two major redactional expansions to it (*erste Fortschreibung*, *zweite Fortschreibung*), plus a number of minor additions that are either later or not exactly datable. Although Konkel explicitly remarks that the notion of three main strata is a simplification,¹⁸ he seems to see them as largely homogeneous. He describes the three layers as follows:

- The original layer (*Grundschrift*): 40:1, 3b-37, 44-46a₂, 47-49; 41:1-15a₂; 42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 3f-10.¹⁹ This deals with the vision of the new temple and its exact measurement by the man. The return of the divine Glory makes it a counterpart to the first temple vision in Ezek 8-11. For Konkel, it is still exilic in date, which allows him to ascribe it to Ezekiel.²⁰
- The first expansion (*erste Fortschreibung*): 40:2a-3a; 43:3a₁-d; 44:1-3; 46:1-3, 8-10, 12; 47:1-21; 48:1-10, 13-21b, 23-29. This layer is seen as the

¹⁶ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*.

¹⁷ Refer back to Chapter 1.2.5.

¹⁸ He says about the layers that it can "durchaus angenommen werden ..., daß sie nicht in einem Zug niedergeschrieben wurden, sondern über einen längeren Zeitraum hinweg entstanden sind."
Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 225.

¹⁹ Verses 40:14, 30 were identified as glosses already during the textual critical analysis and are not further contemplated by Konkel.

²⁰ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 244-246, 268-270.

programmatic writing for a near restoration under a Davidic leader. Containing the vision of the river and the distribution of the land, it expresses almost eschatological hopes. The east gate plays a special role in many of its texts. It also provides explicit links to the vision accounts in 1:1-3:15; 8-11. Konkel dates the first expansion after Cyrus's conquest of Babylon in 539 but before the consecration of the second temple in 515.²¹

- The second expansion (*zweite Fortschreibung*): 40:38-43, 46c; 42:1-14; 43:11-27; 44:4-30a (31); 45:1-25; 46:4-7, (11,) 16-24; 47:22-23; 48:11-12. This is characterized by a xenophobic tendency and a specific interest in Zadokite priests while denying the status of priests to the Levites. This, for Konkel, suggests a postexilic date, probably not before the second half of the fifth century.²² This stratum contains mainly descriptions and law texts; the only instance of the genre *vision account* is 44:4-5.

5.3.2 Redaction in Ezek 40-43

Among those scholars who make use of diachronic analysis, most locate the oldest parts of the second temple vision within Chapters 40-42, sometimes including 43:1-11,²³ because the existence and description of the temple, as well as the

²¹ *ibid.*, 270, 285f. The definition of this stratum is rather weak as it includes all insertions that are not original but apparently older than the second expansion (*ibid.*, 239f.). The only positive criteria Konkel applies are the consistent use of נָגַב for “south” (as opposed to דָּרוֹם) and that of מִפְתָּח for “threshold” (as opposed to פֶּתַח). Yet these are helpful in a very limited way only. Konkel distributes the twelve occurrences of דָּרוֹם in Ezek 40-42 into three different editorial stages (40:24ab, 27ab, 28ab, 44b[c], 45c = original account; 42:12b, 13b_p = second expansion; 41:11c; 42:18a = later additions); but all eleven occurrences of נָגַב in Ezek 40-48 (Ezek 40:2c; 46:9*bis*; 47:1d, 19*bis*; 48:10, 16, 17, 28, 33) belong for him *per definitionem* to one redaction. And yet נָגַב is the generally far more frequent term, with 110 occurrences in the OT (as opposed to 17 for דָּרוֹם). Moreover, פֶּתַח, which Konkel treats as a signal for original material, occurs in Ezekiel solely in chaps 40-43 (40:6*dbis*, 7d; 41:16b; 43:8*abis*); thus it cannot be called a particularly favourite Ezekielian vocabulary. מִפְתָּח, on the other hand, is found in 9:3a₂; 10:4a, [18a] as well as in 46:2; 47:1b, i.e. in both original and redactional material. The occurrences seem also to be too few in number to make a reliable criterion for redaction criticism. Finally, when two text units have a lexeme in common, they only *possibly* but not *necessarily* belong to the same layer.

²² *ibid.*, 286f., 346-348. On the problem of the “foreigners” and the role of the Zadokites in the second expansion, see also Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 165-170.

²³ So for example Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 31-33, 108f; and Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1241f. who both find the original in 40:1-37, 47-49; 41:1-4. Zimmerli however reckons with further, though later,

presence of the Glory within it, is presupposed by all the following material. Opinions differ regarding the status of specific verses or sections of Ezek 40-42.

The present thesis largely agrees with Konkel's results, with the exception of four cases, concerning 40:2, 44-46a₂; 41:5-15a₂; 43:3f, where it will propose modifications to his decision. The portions of text regarded as original are 40:1-2a*, 3b-37, 47-49; 41:1-4; 42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 4-10.

In the following, the reasons for assigning portions of 40:1-43:12 to redaction shall be discussed. The result will be the demarcation of the original vision account.

5.3.2.1 Redaction in Ezek 40-42

Konkel attributes 40:2-3a to what he calls the *first expansion*.²⁴ I agree with him regarding the secondary nature of these verses, except for the first two words: בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים (in divine visions). The identical phrase recurs in Ezek 1:1d; 8:3d.²⁵ The comparison with 8:3d in particular suggests that בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים was, in the original, part of the previous sentence and belongs to the authentic material:

8:3d ... וַתָּבֵא אֹתִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים ...

40:1c-2a ... וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי שָׁמָּה בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים ...

Both clauses are situated at the beginning of a major vision account (the two vision accounts in question being arranged as counterparts to each other). The subject in both is a divine force, though in 8:3 it is רִיחָה while in 40:1 it is (the hand of)

Ezekielian material within chaps 41-43, plus 44:1-2; 47:1-12. In opposition to this, for Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 133f; and Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 532f., no part of chaps 40-48 is Ezekielian, and he finds some of the oldest (late sixth-century) passages also in Chapters 45-47. For a thorough criticism of Rudnig's redaction theory on Ezek 40-48, see Konkel, "Gola von 597," 357-383.

The argumentation of Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 135-140 who considers the entire temple description 40:3-42:20 as a secondary insertion, is not convincing. The tensions he observes between 40:2 and 40:3-4 are more readily explained if indeed 40:2 is redactional (see below).

²⁴ On the diachronic analysis regarding 40:2-3a, see Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 30-32; on their classification into a redactional layer, see *ibid.*, 240.

²⁵ This is also noticed e.g. by Paul M. Joyce, "Temple and Worship in Ezekiel 40-48," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day, LHB/OTS 422 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 149.

YHWH directly. The sentence structure is identical: After a third person singular *wayyiqtol* form of בּוֹא and the direct object אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם, the destination “to Jerusalem” is given, once explicitly (8:3d), and once implicitly through שָׁמָּה, which refers back to “the city” in 40:1b.²⁶ In 8:3 this is followed by the specification בְּמִדְבַּר אֶלְהֵיִם, and then by a closer description of the location in Jerusalem to where the prophet is transported. In 40:1-2, בְּמִדְבַּר אֶלְהֵיִם has been included in the following verse, yet this could have happened only after the insertion of the gloss that begins with הַבְּיָמִינִי and comprises the rest of 40:2 and 40:3a.

The secondary character of the rest of 40:2-3a is indicated by the repetition of 40:1c in 40:3a. Furthermore, אֶרֶץ יְשׁוּרָאֵל (2a) is not an Ezekielian expression;²⁷ and also the term נֹגֵב for “south” in 2c – if it is not to be textual-critically emended²⁸ – is not otherwise used within Ezek 40-42. Furthermore, the mentioning of “a very high mountain,” on which temple and city are located, recurs again only in 43:12, which is, as will be illustrated shortly, also redactional. The existence of a high mountain is completely ignored by the description of the land and of the *terumah* as well as by the vision of the river. This last point would suggest a rather late date for the insertion of 40:2, and not, as Konkel proposes,²⁹ with the first expansion. Finally, 40:2c seems already to presuppose a distinction of temple and city as in 45:6; 48:15-29 whereas 40:1 implies that the temple is situated within the city.³⁰ Since 40:2 points backward to the vision of the valley of bones,³¹ as well as forward to later chapters (theme word “city”),³² it is probably related to the redactional efforts to enhancing the homogeneity of the book. The only repetition of the “mountain” in

²⁶ This speaks for the MT reading here, since LXX omits שָׁמָּה.

²⁷ אֶרֶץ יְשׁוּרָאֵל occurs only three times in Ezekiel: here, in 47:18a and in 27:17 (both other occurrences are probably redactional as well); Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 32.

²⁸ Refer back to Section 5.2.

²⁹ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 240.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 29, 31f.

³¹ The verbal form וַיִּינָהֵג recurs only in Ezek 37:1c; 40:2b.

³² The theme word “city” (עִיר) occurs 61 times in Ezekiel, (17 times within chaps 40-48: 40:1b, 2c; 43:3c; 45:6a, 7bis; 48:15ab, 17, 18c, 19, 20, 21a, 22a, 30a, 31a, 35b). The two chapters with the highest percentage of occurrences are Ezek 9 (five times) and Ezek 48 (eleven times).

43:12 could perhaps be a sign that the two verses were inserted together.³³ Though this is not sure, the sum of these observations clearly suggests that 40:2-3a is, from **וְיָאֵן** onward, one of the later additions in the history of the second temple vision. Its first two words however are a typical feature of Ezekiel's vision accounts and there is no need to doubt their authenticity.

The first longer section³⁴ that appears to be editorial is 40:38-46. Its purely descriptive style, lacking any visionary element, distinguishes it from the context. For this reason, 40:38-46 is not usually included in the original material. In contrast to Gese and Zimmerli,³⁵ Konkel dismisses only 40:38-43, seeing in 40:44-46a₂ again original material,³⁶ because the description of the chambers of the priests in these verses is presupposed in 41:9-10, which Konkel regards as original. However, as will be discussed immediately below, it seems more plausible that 41:5-15a₂ are in fact of secondary nature; in that case Konkel's argument becomes pointless. Moreover, the man's speech in 40:45-46 destroys, as Zimmerli accurately observes,³⁷ the tension built up from 40:5 onward until in 41:4 the silence is broken only when the man and the prophet reach the most holy place. Hence 40:44-46a₂ is unlikely to be original.

The specification 40:46c, restricting priesthood to the Zadokites, is widely agreed to be the work of an even later hand that tried to harmonize 40:45-46 with 44:15. Consequently it is assigned by Konkel to the second expansion layer.³⁸ Whether the rest of the section (40:38-46a₂) has been inserted all at once or in a number of steps cannot be determined here, although certainly 40:44-46a₂ will have

³³ 43:12 belongs to Konkel's "second expansion," which implies a definitely postexilic date.

³⁴ Before that, verse 40:14 seems to be made up of "textually corrupt elements from vv 15 and 16," inserted at this point "by mistake." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 335. Although most of it is represented in LXX, the verse seems indeed meaningless and is generally thought not to be part of the original account; see e.g. Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 145-148; followed by Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 985; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 220.

³⁵ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 21; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1024.

³⁶ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 236.

³⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1024.

³⁸ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 41, 47f.

to be dated earlier than the second expansion that along with Konkel will be maintained here, and probably earlier than 41:5-15a₂.

As mentioned above, Konkel sees 41:5-15a₂ as part of the original vision account. However, this seems unlikely because of the following stylistic observations: before 41:4, which is seen as the climax of the temple tour, there is a fixed structure to every single scene; though less strict than in Ezek 8, it is easily recognizable.³⁹ Each scene begins with a guidance note (“he brought me”)⁴⁰ plus place indication; the speech part is substituted by the measuring (מָדַד) and the description of the respective temple feature. Only 41:4 contains a short speech part. After that, this structure, especially the guidance notes, disappears completely. Even the measuring notes diminish; frequently, dimensions are given without a previous מָדַד or similar. Thus it is no longer possible to distinguish scenes, even though several times location changes are undoubtedly implied. For instance, the prophet seems to remain in the *hēkāl* from 41:1a onward, while the man enters the most holy place. However, from 41:5a onward, the man is measuring the wall of the temple and the side chambers around the temple – he must therefore have gone outside again, yet differently from the preceding scenes, this is not recounted. Zimmerli has noticed these and other stylistic discrepancies to previous sections; nevertheless he hesitates to exclude 41:5-15a₂ from the original account because of “considerations of content,” i.e. because the features measured and described in this passage are essential to understand the architectural structure of the temple complex.⁴¹ But this reasoning presupposes that it is an aim of Ezekiel’s second temple vision to convey a

³⁹ Refer to Section 5.4.3.

⁴⁰ 40:17a, 24a, 28a, 32a, 35a, 48a; 41:1a; 43:1a.

⁴¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 374. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1033, cf. 1240. He eventually settles on 41:5-15a₂ being an expansion by the same author as the original guidance vision. For the same reasons of content, Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 236 attributes 41:5-15a₂ “sicher” to the original layer without explaining the stylistic differences. Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 546f. qualifies 41:5-12 as an “intrusive narrative” and “bare description” while he keeps 41:13-15a₂ in the original account.

temple plan, which can be drawn, built or in any other way visualized. None of the other visions in Ezekiel fulfil this criterion. On the contrary, the overdimensioned gates (but no wall around the inner court!) rather suggest a symbolic or theological meaning.⁴² The giving of certain measurements only and the lack of others would reinforce this. At the same time, from a perspective interested in factual temple construction, these “blanks” in the original description are a very good reason for the *insertion* of 41:5-15a₂ and other passages in order to enable the reader to get a comprehensive image of the temple as a building structure.⁴³

The next secondary section follows immediately: the interior of the temple building, 41:15c-26. Since the commentary by Fohrer and Galling in 1955,⁴⁴ this passage has been widely recognised as an addition because of its different vocabulary, style and structure. Konkel treats it as a relatively late, independent insertion.⁴⁵ It is remarkable because of its mentioning of two-faced cherubim images carved on the temple walls and doors (41:17-20, 25): these decorations no more than faintly resemble the living four-faced and four-winged cherubim of Ezek 10; yet they seem to allude to them intentionally.⁴⁶

Also the subsequent description of various chambers in the inner and outer court, 42:1-14, diverges from the usual style of the previous two chapters. Although dimensions are given, there is no measuring reported and the precise definition of how some of the chambers are to be used (42:13-14) is without parallel throughout the guidance vision. For these reasons, 42:1-14 is usually seen as a later expansion of

⁴² Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 19-30 argues that even the final text of 40-48 lacks information that would be essential if it was a construction blueprint. She sees the functionality of the building description in the defining of space instead.

⁴³ As Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1240 suggests, this insertion could have occurred relatively early in the redaction history of Ezek 40-48; yet it is equally possible that it was inspired by the planning of the historical second temple, which would rather suggest a close connection to Konkel's “first expansion” toward the end of the exile.

⁴⁴ Fohrer and Galling, *Ezekiel*, 233f.

⁴⁵ See, also on the research history, Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 60.

⁴⁶ This might be an additional indication that 41:15c-26 was written at a certain distance to prior parts of the book.

Ezek 40-42*.⁴⁷ On account of its interest in priestly holiness, this section is reasonably included into Konkel's "second expansion."⁴⁸

The style of the last six verses of the chapter, 42:15-20, disagrees even more with the larger context. The different measuring unit (reed instead of cubit) is often textual-critically "corrected" according to the Septuagint.⁴⁹ Konkel however doubts the priority of the Greek in this case because it seems to adapt its *Vorlage* to the context while the MT certainly offers the *lectio difficilior*.⁵⁰ The tension can rather be explained through redaction criticism as several linguistic-historical reasons indicate the lateness at least of 42:16-20a: Konkel asserts for example that the use of *qatal-x* clauses to express progress in the past (as in 42:16a, 17a, 19b) is a feature of Mishnah-Hebrew; furthermore, only here within Ezek 40-48 is רָחַק used to signify the four points of the compass (42:16a, 17a, 18a, 19a, 20a).⁵¹ Yet while these observations are evident signs of the secondary character of 42:16-20a, there is, with Konkel, but counter to the majority of critics, no reason to deny the originality of 42:15, 20b-e. Also the fact that 42:15 is repeated in 42:20a would, again, betray only vv. 16-20a as secondary. As a consequence, the original vision account continues after 41:4 directly with 42:15. Hence just as the wall encloses the visionary temple as a construction (40:5; 42:20), so it surrounds, as a formal *inclusio*, its literary description.

5.3.2.2 The Status of Ezek 43:1-12

Thus Ezekiel's visionary tour around the new temple finishes where it began: at the surrounding wall. Subsequent to this is the account of the return of the Glory of

⁴⁷ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 26-28, 32. On the research history of this section, see Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 62.

⁴⁸ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 236, 241.

⁴⁹ On this problem, see e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1066; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 227; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 568.

⁵⁰ For the entire paragraph: Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 70.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 236. This is a similar argumentation as for 37:7-10 (4.2.2.2-4.2.2.5). Note however that the use of *qatal-x* instead of *wayyiqtol* is a greater irregularity than the use of *w^eqatal*.

YHWH (43:1-12). The position of this episode in the redaction history of Ezek 40-48 is disputed.⁵² In spite of the formal new beginning in 43:1, the passage as such seems appropriate as the original continuation of Ezek 40-42*⁵³ because the temple, however perfect in its construction, remains deficient and functionless without being inhabited by the divinity. As Zimmerli puts it, “The guidance vision ... has, regarded on its own, something unsatisfactory about it. The separation of the (neutrally) holy awaits the speech of the one who is himself personally holy.”⁵⁴ Besides, on a formal level, the reference from 43:10a back to 40:4 (“describe...!”) presents itself as an *inclusio*, suggesting a natural continuation of 40-42* in 43:1-10. This *inclusio* is one reason why Konkel sees in 43:10 the end of the primary text material.⁵⁵

Konkel also notices an incoherence between 43:10 and 11, since in v. 10 shame is seen as the *response* to the knowledge of the temple,⁵⁶ while in v. 11 it is the *condition* for its proclamation. This tension is commonly removed by means of textual emendation,⁵⁷ but – as Konkel points out – v. 11c employs up to now unused terminology. What is more, the prophet is commanded to announce “all its ordinances and all its laws” (11ce) but these are revealed to him only from the next section onward. Verse 43:11 comes therefore too early. At the same time it functions as a bridge to what follows. As such it presupposes the law sections and cannot be older than them. The concluding law formula 43:12 in turn depends on 43:11 since it

⁵² For example Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf* denies the originality of 43:1-12 (p. 35) and situates it very close to his “prince layer” (p. 114). Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 75 includes 43:1-7c in the basic narrative. Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 83-93, 345-349 attributes only 43:6a, 7abc to his oldest layer, while he regards 43:1-2, 3-4 as very late. Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 27f. argues that, in contrast to his interpretation of Ezek 40-42, chap. 43 is concerned with the “soon-to-be-restored earthly shrine.”

⁵³ With (for 43:1-2, 4-10) Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 239.

⁵⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 548. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1241. Zimmerli solves the problem through a compromise: 43:1-11 is secondary to 40-42* but added by Ezekiel himself. In agreement with Zimmerli, Levenson, *Theology*, 10f. affirms the unity of chaps 40-42* and 43:1-11 also from a history of religion perspective.

⁵⁵ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 80f, 239.

⁵⁶ The feeling of shame as the *result* of the divine saving action is unique to the book of Ezekiel. It also recurs in 6:9; 16:54, 61; 20:43; 36:31-32; 39:26; 44:13. On this topic, see Chap. 8.1.3.3.

⁵⁷ So, with reference to the Septuagint, Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 465; Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 40; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1067; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 243; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 586f. All of these authors notice the tension between 43:10 and 11a and resolve it by textual emendation. Yet it cannot be excluded that the Greek translator found the tension and then eliminated it.

too speaks of the law of the temple. It also presupposes the “high mountain” of 40:2 and alludes to the different grades of holiness in a way that becomes important throughout the second expansion. This is where Konkel situates both verses; though it is unlikely that they were inserted together, they fit in the same editorial mindset.

Within 43:1-10, Konkel excludes v. 3a-e from the original layer but seems to keep v. 3f in it.⁵⁸ Although it would seem that 43:5a (the narrator is lifted up by the spirit) presupposes 43:3f (the narrator falls upon his face), this is not necessarily the case. The expression *נשא + ריה* as subject + first-person singular object (me) is in its other five occurrences in Ezekiel (3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24) never preceded by the falling down of the prophet but always indicates a significant change in location, usually at the beginning or at the end of a vision. Where the spirit is said to put the narrator back onto his feet, the verb *בוא* plus preposition *ב* is employed, followed by *וַתַּעֲמִדְנִי עַל-רַגְלָי* (2:2; 3:24; cf. 37:10). None of these elements are present in 43:1-6. The entire verse 43:3 can therefore be regarded as the product of redaction.

Konkel attributes 43:3 to the first expansion. However, several reasons indicate that it is more likely later than that. Almost the entire verse is an explicit reference to both of the preceding *כְּבוֹד* vision accounts in Chapters 8-11 (“when I came to destroy the city,” 3c) and 1:1-3:15 (“that I had seen by the river Chebar,” 3e). As such, 43:3 is strongly reminiscent of the back-references in 3:23; 8:4; 10:15, 20, 22. Most probably, all these verses are the work of the same redaction.⁵⁹ In this case, 43:3 would need to be dated rather late in the redaction history of the book.⁶⁰ For this reason, Konkel’s inclusion of 43:3 in the “first expansion”⁶¹ is not convincing.

⁵⁸ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 234, 240 assigns only 43:3a-d to the redaction but in the diachronic analysis (p. 80) he speaks of “43,3”; hence his position on 43:3f is not discussed.

⁵⁹ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1077; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 80.

⁶⁰ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1077 envisions it, rather vaguely, “bei der Zusammenstellung zum Buchganzen.”

⁶¹ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 240. While Konkel sees both 40:2-3a and 43:3 as link verses on the same level, it needs to be recognized that the referencing technique of the former is rather

Similar to Ezek 8-11, also in 43:2-5 the two designations כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (43:2a) and כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה (43:4a, 5c; 44:4c) are used side by side. Contrary to the account of the Glory's departure, however, in 43:1-10* there is no sign that the longer title "Glory of the God of Israel" should be secondary to the more common "Glory of YHWH."⁶² Rather, it seems that the phrase is utilized here on purpose.

Outside Ezekiel, the only instances of combining כְּבוֹד with אֱלֹהִים and יִשְׂרָאֵל in one sentence are in the narrative about the loss and the return of the ark in 1 Sam 4-6. Twice in 1 Sam 4:21-22 it is said that "The glory (כְּבוֹד) has departed from Israel, for the ark of God (אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים) has been captured" (NRSV). When the Philistines eventually are prompted to send the ark back, together with gifts of gold, they are told to thus "give *glory* to the *God of Israel*" (1 Sam 6:5 NRSV, italics added).⁶³ The longer wording כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in Ezek 43:2a, besides conveying a greater solemnity, perhaps also evoked subtly this story of abandonment and seeming failure, which ended in greater glory, as well as associations to the covenant tradition.⁶⁴

Therefore it is highly possible that the expression "the Glory of the God of Israel" was coined by the author of Ezek 43:1-2, 4-10 in variation of the term "Glory of YHWH" (which this author also used). Later, the phrase influenced some of the redactions of Ezek 8-11.

implicit while 43:3 makes use of explicit identity statements. Additionally, the only reference to prior vision accounts in the non-original parts of 40:2 is וַיִּיחַזְקֵי (37:1; 40:2b) while it seems that the words קַמְרָאוֹת אֱלֹהִים (40:2a) are not redactional but simply part of the original account (cf. 5.3.2.1). All other allusions (e.g. the mountain, the city) are within chaps 40-48. There are therefore no compelling reasons to assume that 40:2-3a and 43:3 derive from the same redaction.

⁶² With Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1077, and Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 263. Contra Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 147. As noted in Chap. 3.2.5.1, the term כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה occurs 37 times in the OT, and ten times in Ezekiel (1:28c; 3:12c, 23; 10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a; 43:4a, 5c; 44:4c) while כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל is exclusively used by Ezekiel in only five instances (8:4a; 9:3a₁; 10:19e; 11:22c; 43:2a). Both terms are used, in Ezekiel, only in the context of vision accounts.

⁶³ Similar is only Josh 7:19, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and make confession to him. Tell me now what you have done" (NRSV).

⁶⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1077.

5.3.2.3 Summary and Outline of the Original Layer

In conclusion, the original account is commonly found in 40:1-43:12*. Within these limits, the following verses are editorial: 40:2 [except the first two words], 3a, 38-46; 41:5-26; 42:1-14, 16-20a; 43:3, 11-12.

This means that the original layer of Ezek 40-48, in modification of Konkel's proposal, comprises: 40:1-2a*, 3b-13, 15-29, 31-37, 47-49; 41:1-4; 42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 4-10. These verses form a sequence of short guidance visions that are introduced by the transportation of the prophet to "the city" (40:1-2a*) and by the presentation and speech of the man "like the appearance of bronze" (40:3-4). This speech, in particular the imperative "describe to the House of Israel," forms an *inclusio* with the conclusive speech of the Glory after returning in the temple (43:7-10). In 40:5-41:4*, the prophet is led all around the temple area and learns the dimensions of its gates, courtyards, and of the temple building. The tour culminates at the most holy place (41:3-4), which is entered by the man alone; after that, both return to the surrounding wall (42:15, 20a). Now that the architectural harmony has been sufficiently observed, the prophet becomes witness to the entry of the divine Glory into the sanctuary (43:1-2, 4-10).

This account is both comprehensive and comprehensible in itself (except perhaps for the lack of a conclusion in the sense of Ezekiel returning to the exiles); it does not present tensions in either form or content. Hence 40:1-43:10* is justifiably regarded as the oldest layer of Ezek 40-48.

5.3.3 Vision Texts in Ezek 44-48

Defining the original vision account has provided a basis from which we can now proceed to examine the position of the remaining sections that contain vision accounts. These are 44:1-2; 44:4-6 and 47:1-12. In Konkel's redaction model, 47:1-

12 and 44:1-2 are part of the first expansion, whereas 44:4-5 is attributed to the second expansion. The first text to be assessed shall therefore be 47:1-12, and subsequently 44:1-2.

5.3.3.1 Redaction in, and Status of, 44:1-2; 47:1-12

The famous vision of the river of life (47:1-12) is confined by the change of location (guidance note) in 47:1a at its beginning and the abrupt change of speaker and topic from 47:12 to 47:13 at its end. In itself, the vision account in 47:1-12 gives the impression of unity in style and content. The structural and syntactic “abundance” that for some scholars is reason to apply redaction criticism is reflecting the abundance described by the narrative.⁶⁵ Only verse 47:11 with its restriction of the “healing” of the Dead Sea out of concern for the salt industry appears awkward enough to suspect a redactional insertion.⁶⁶

While it is difficult to define its exact position in the redaction history of Ezek 40-48, this section shall argue that, with the exception of 44:1-2, the narrative in 47:1-12 refers only to 40:1-43:10* and should be considered separately from the other sections that Konkel defined as “first expansion” (i.e. 46:1-3, 8-10, 12; 47:13-21; 48:1-29).⁶⁷

In the first place, it appears highly improbable that, as Konkel implies, 47:1-12* was originally continued by 47:13-21.⁶⁸ From one unit to the next, there is not only a sudden change of speaker (the man in 47:8-12; YHWH from 47:13 onward) and of topic (from the healing river to the boundaries of the land) without any

⁶⁵ With Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 201. Among the authors who distinguish various redactions within 47:1-12 are: Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 90-95; Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 165-173; Wolfgang Zwickel, “Die Tempelquelle Ezechiel 47: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung,” *EvT* 55 (1995): 142f; and Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 167-175 (also in Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 614-617).

⁶⁶ With Fohrer and Galling, *Ezechiel*, 245; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 581; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1189, 1198.

⁶⁷ For this part, I agree with Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1240-1245 to a greater extent than with Konkel.

⁶⁸ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 240 assigns both 47:1-12 and 47:13-21 to the first expansion even though he notices the abrupt transition from one to the other.

transition; there is also a genre break from a prophetic vision account to a purely verbal divine oracle with the nature of a law text. Even though the topic of the boundaries is to some extent prepared by the vision of the river, it shifts the focus decidedly.⁶⁹

It is also striking that the river of 47:1-12* is never mentioned in any other part of the greater text unit Ezek 40-48. Not even 47:13-23, which explicitly deals with the geography of the land, reflects any knowledge of this river. This alone, however, is of very little help for dating 47:1-10, 12. The reason why the river is not accounted for in the following description of the land and its boundaries is that 47:13-21 is written in a far more practical-realistic perspective. The vision of the river describes the healing consequences of the dwelling of the Glory of YHWH in the temple and the thus resultant prosperity. Its logic is mythological and symbolic, not topographical.⁷⁰ In this view, 47:1-12* completes the original temple vision. It is possible that 47:1-12*, 13-21 were composed close in time to each other, as in its own way 47:13-21 also voices fantastic expectations when it supposes the restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel. Yet the vision of the river and the division of the land are each following an entirely different type of logic. Hence, even though their age might differ only little: the abrupt change of speaker, topic, genre and underlying logic does not allow for ascribing 47:1-10, 12 and 47:13-48:29 to the same redactor.

On the other hand, 47:1-10, 12 cannot belong to the original account because it employs a different lexeme for “south” (נגב, as opposed to דרום in the original layer); because of the formal *inclusio* that confines 40:4-43:10; and because its perspective on the entire land from the temple to the Dead Sea contrasts with the concentration

⁶⁹ Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 178f., 189 seems to advocate an original continuity; he does not, however, address these differences.

⁷⁰ On the mythological, “supra-historical” character of 47:1-12, see e.g. Levenson, *Theology*, 11-14; Tuell, “Temple Vision,” 101. The vision of the river is similar in its grandiosity to other Ezekielian images of salvation such as the revived bones (37:1-14), the new heart (36:22-31), and the reign of the good shepherd (34:23-31). It is also reminiscent of the hopeful images in Second Isaiah.

on the temple area both in Chapters 8-11* and in 40:1-43:10*. Furthermore, although the man of Chapters 40-43 is clearly intended to continue his role as a guide and measurer in 47:1-12, his roles do not exactly match. The measurements of the river are quite dissimilar to those in Chapters 40-42* because they only serve to cover a specific distance while the actual depth of the water is assessed by walking through it (47:3-5). A second difference is that the guide in Chapters 40-42* is mostly silent; explanation occurs only once, and then it is only of three words (41:4d). By contrast, the vision of the river consists to about 50% of direct speech, and it is the long explanation, more than the sight, that really conveys the message.

Whether or not other redactions had already occurred at the time of the insertion of 47:1-12* cannot be verified here; nonetheless it can be securely affirmed that within Ezek 40-48 the vision of the river solely refers to 40:1-43:10*,⁷¹ with the only exception that it presupposes the permanent closure of the east gate. For this is why the prophet is led outside by the deviation through the north gate (47:2). Why he cannot pass through the east gate is not addressed in 47:1-12*; the shutting of the east gate is announced and explained in 44:1-2. It seems likely, therefore, that these two verses were inserted together with, or prior to, 47:1-10, 12.⁷²

This leads to a problem concerning 44:1-2. While the subject of 44:1a is not specified, the speech introduction in 44:2a contains an explicit subject: YHWH. The originality of the *nomen sacrum* is however heavily doubted⁷³ because of the awkward word order in 44:2a,⁷⁴ and particularly because the speech refers to the

⁷¹ The three connections that Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 276 finds to its immediate context (the wordplay מְקֹדֵשׁ וּבֵית and נְהַלָּה/נְהַל, the references to the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean, and the importance of בית and מְקֹדֵשׁ in both 47:1-12 and 47:13-48:35) are too general in this framework to be a compelling sign of genuine interrelation. They may have played their role in the redactional arrangement.

⁷² Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1242; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 240.

⁷³ For instance by Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 50f; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1107; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 244.

⁷⁴ The word sequence in 44:2a is unusual since יהוה ought to follow the verb immediately. The common word order is found e.g. in Ezek 9:4; 23:36. There are nevertheless a few other

divine name in third person, not – as would be expected in divine speech – in first person. The conclusion seems plausible that the speech in 44:2, and consequently the guiding in 44:1a, was originally accomplished by the man, and only secondarily ascribed to YHWH.

Since 44:3 abruptly mentions the prince (אֲשִׁינָה), it seems to aim at establishing a connection to 46:1-12 and was therefore presumably introduced together with the latter.⁷⁵

Hence 44:1-2; 47:1-10, 12 emerge as an expansion of the original temple vision that, while it is not related to other parts of Ezek 40-48, enhances and amplifies its message of hope towards the end of the exile.

5.3.3.2 The “Redactional Vision Account” Ezek 44:4-5d, 6

The only formal vision account that Konkel attributes to the “second expansion” is 44:4-5, which presents itself as the visionary introduction to the largest complex of cultic law within Ezek 40-48 (in the present text, laws and ordinances follow from 44:6 until 46:18).

More than any other section in Chapters 40-48, the little vision account 44:4-5 contains all the typical features of the genre:⁷⁶ a visionary part with a guidance note (44:4a) and a surprise clause (4bc); followed by divine speech, introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר (5a) and commencing with imperatives (5bcd). It is remarkable that the “classical” visionary surprise clause (וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי הוֹרֵא) occurs in the entire temple vision only in 44:4bc. Elsewhere, the guidance note substitutes the reference to seeing.

occurrences within the OT of the same sequence as in 44:2a, 5a; for example: Ex 4:2; 19:24; Judg 6:16; 7:9; Am 7:15.

⁷⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1108f., 1244-1246. Also Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 56 separates 44:3 from 44:1-2, mainly for linguistic reasons. Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 156 does not, and therefore sees all three verses 44:1-3 “unter dem direkten Einfluss von 46,1-12 entstanden“.

⁷⁶ Refer to Chap. 1.3 above; Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60.

At a closer look, however, 44:4-5d reveals itself as a jigsaw puzzle⁷⁷ from elements of the man's speech in 40:4 and from the vision of the Glory's return, 43:2-5, 11.⁷⁸

44:4a	וַיְבִיאֵנִי דְרָד־שַׁעַר הַצְּפוֹן אֶל־פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת	וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־שַׁעַר הַצְּפוֹן	e.g. 40:35a
b	וַאֲרָא		
c	וַהֲגִה מְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה	וַהֲגִה מְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה הַבַּיִת	43:5c (2a)
d	וַאֲפֹל אֶל־פְּנֵי:	וַאֲפֹל אֶל־פְּנֵי ⁷⁹	43:3f//9:8c
5a	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה	וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלַי הָאִישׁ	40:4a
b	כְּנֹאדָם שִׁים לְבָךְ	כְּנֹאדָם	b
c	וַרְאָה בְּעֵינַיִךְ	רְאָה בְּעֵינַיִךְ	
d	וּבְאָזְנֶיךָ שָׁמַע אֶת כָּל־	וּבְאָזְנֶיךָ שָׁמַע / וְשִׁים לְבָךְ לְכֹל	c/d
e	אֲשֶׁר אָנִי מְדַבֵּר אֹתָךְ	אֲשֶׁר־אָנִי מְרַאָּה אֹתָךְ...	e
f	לְכֹל־חַקֹּת בַּיִת־יְהוָה וּלְכֹל־תּוֹרֹתוֹ וְשָׁמַתָּ לְבָךְ לְמַבּוֹא הַבַּיִת בְּכֹל מוֹצְאָי הַמְקֻדָּשׁ:	צוֹרֵת הַבַּיִת וְתַכּוּנָתוֹ וּמוֹצְאָיו (וּמוֹבְאָיו וְכֹל־צוֹרֹתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־חַקֹּתָיו) וְכֹל־צוֹרֹתוֹ וְכֹל־תּוֹרֹתוֹ הַיּוֹדֵעַ אוֹתָם	43:11c

Table 15 – Ezek 44:4-5 Sources

In a similar way, 44:6 recalls Ezek 2-3 because 44:6ab (“you shall say to ..., ‘Thus says the Lord YHWH’”) is an almost identical copy of 2:4cd and 3:11de. and the combination of מְרִי (rebellious) and בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל (House of Israel; 44:6a) occurs quite frequently throughout Ezek 2-3.⁸⁰ Moreover, the term תּוֹעֲבוֹת (abominations) is a theme word throughout Ezek 8 (8:6g, 9c, 13c, 15d, 17c [9:4c]) and then reappears in 43:8c.⁸¹ Additionally, even without lexematic connections, 44:6c (“Enough of all your abominations, House of Israel!”) recalls 43:7-9 in its reference to the aberrations that had caused YHWH to leave his temple (43:7d “no more shall the

⁷⁷ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 112 calls 44:4-5 a “von der Redaktion völlig zusammengestückte, künstliche Einleitung”; see also pp. 52-57, 115 and Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1242. An analogous technique has been recognized already with 3:22-26, a compilation of elements from 1:1-3:15 (see Chap. 2.7). Also 40:2 and 43:3 betray a similar effort to link different visions.

⁷⁸ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 52-57 demonstrates in detail that 44:4 is dependent on 43:2-6, and 44:5 on 40:4; 43:11 while a reversed dependence is not plausible. However, Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 153f; and Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 81 assume that 43:11 presupposes 44:5. Considering that both 43:11 and 44:4-5 are redactionally designed as transitions to a composition of law texts, it might be possible that they are contemporary.

A synopsis of these verses is offered, in transcribed Hebrew and in English, by Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 619.

⁷⁹ The phrase וַאֲפֹל אֶל־פְּנֵי (and I fell on my face) occurs mainly in redactional verses: 1:28e; 3:23; 11:13c; 43:3f; 44:4d; it seems to be original only in 9:8c.

⁸⁰ The combination בַּיִת מְרִי intending Israel occurs four times in 1:1-3:15 (2:5c, 6g, 8c; 3:9d), twice in 3:22-27 (3:26d, 27g) and other six times in 12:2, 3, 9, 25; 17:12; 24:3. The only occurrence in the second half of the book is here in 44:6a.

⁸¹ The term תּוֹעֲבוֹת is frequently used elsewhere in Ezekiel's words of judgment: 5:9, 11; 6:9, 11; 7:3, 4, 8, 9, 20; 12:16; 14:6; 16:2, 22, 36, 43, 47, 51, 58; 18:13, 24; 20:4; 22:2; 23:36; 33:29. It also appears retrospectively in 36:31; 43:8c; 44:7b, 13b.

House of Israel defile my holy name”; 43:9a “now they will put away their idolatry”).

6a	וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל-מְרִי אֶל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל	וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם	2:5c, 6g, 8c; 3:9d
b	כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה	כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה	2:4cd // 3:11de
c	רַב־לְכֶם מִכָּל-תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל:	תּוֹעֲבוֹת	8:6-17; 43:7-9

Table 16 – Ezek 44:6 Sources

It would seem, therefore, that 44:4-5d, 6 were inserted together. Intertwined with these verses is, in 44:5ef, 7-8, the theme of the exclusion of foreigners from the temple as the first topic of the law collection. This set of law texts might have, partly or entirely, pre-existed independently of the temple vision; their introduction into the overall context of the second temple vision seems to be the central interest of the editorial vision account in 44:4-5d, 6.⁸² As a consequence, the compilation of visionary elements in 44:4-5d, 6 is a purely redactional technique,⁸³ which not only allowed the redactor to connect dissimilar pieces of texts smoothly but at the same time even increased the coherence of the book and enhanced the temple laws through rooting them in the presence of YHWH.⁸⁴ If this is the function of 44:4-5d, 6, then it has no further significance on its own.

In 44:5a, the explicit subject *YHWH* (“and YHWH said to me”) is thought by Gese to be secondary, in analogy to 44:2a.⁸⁵ Here again the subsequent speech contains the divine name in the third person. However, contrary to 44:2, in the context of 44:4-5d, the only logically possible speaker for 44:5b onward is YHWH. It is precisely the aim of the little vision to give the proclaimed law a divine authority. Hence the tension of the *nomen sacrum* within the divine speech should rather be explained by the overall editorial character of 44:4-5d, which is of a later

⁸² Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 57f.

⁸³ Then, 44:4-5d, 6 are late-comers in the redaction history of Ezek 40-48. As Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 164-167 points out convincingly, the theme of the foreigner in connection with the temple in 44:5ef, 7-9 suggests a post-exilic date. If 44:4-5d, 6 are meant to integrate these and the subsequent verses into the temple vision, they are, by consequence, even more recent.

⁸⁴ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 260.

⁸⁵ Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 50f. Refer to Section 5.3.3.1 above.

date than the law collection. In this case, the subject YHWH in 44:5a is original within a secondary context. It might be argued that, after 44:4-5d, 6 were inserted, 44:2a added the tetragram in assimilation to 44:5a.

5.3.4 Summary

Similar to the vision accounts in Ezek 1:1-3:15 and 8-11, and even more so, the account of the second temple vision in Ezek 40-48 is certainly the product of a long and complex redaction history. For the redaction-critical analysis, the present thesis has drawn especially on the work done by Zimmerli and Konkel. This analysis has particularly focused on determining the status and relative order of 40:1-43:12; 44:1-6; 47:1-12, i.e. of those portions of text that contain typical features of the genre prophetic vision account or that are immediately connected with vision accounts. No attention has been paid to other parts, such as the cultic laws, the festival ordinances, the distribution of the land, and the city. The results are summarized as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Original vision account | 40:1-2a*, 3b-13, 15-37, 47-49; 41:1-4;
42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 4-10 |
| 2) East gate and river of life | 44:1-2; 47:1-10, 12 |
| 3) Redactional links | 43:3; 44:4-5d, 6 |
| 4) Insertions and glosses | 40:2-3a, 14, 38-46; 41:5-26; 42:1-14, 16-20a;
47:11 [+ glosses in terms of textual criticism] |
| 5) Non-visionary pieces of texts | 43:11-27; 44:3, 5ef, 7-31; 45:1-46:24;
47:13-23; 48:1-35 |

The original account (1) covered the vision of the new temple and the return of the Glory. This account was gradually enlarged over a long period of time.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen* dates his “first expansion” between 538 and 515, and his “second expansion” to the fifth century, while e.g. 41:15c-26; 42:16-20a appear to be considerably more recent than that.

The only expansion of significance for this thesis is the vision of the river of life (2). The river, which issues from the sanctuary, is both formally and logically closely related to the temple vision as it portrays the effects of the divine presence for the land. On the other hand, the shift of focus toward the land is too great to allow an assignment of 47:1-12* to the original layer. Despite the fact that the chronological position of 47:1-12* in the redaction history of Ezek 40-48 cannot be exactly determined, it is safe to treat it as an expansion to 40:1-43:10* because, regardless of whether other additions were already present, the vision of the river refers only to the temple and to the return of the Glory (40:1-43:10*) and to 44:1-2.

It is presumed that at least part of the law collection in Chapters 44-45 existed independently and that it was integrated into the temple vision through the compiled vision account in 44:4-5d, 6. Establishing to what extent the law text pre-existed would require further detailed analysis which has to be omitted by this thesis. The back-reference to prior vision accounts in 43:3 is here included in the same layer as 44:4-5d, 6 (3) because, as will become clearer later on,⁸⁷ the techniques of compiled vision account and explicit back-references seem to be closely related in Ezekiel and are probably utilized by the same redactor or group of redactors.

The remaining insertions to texts with visionary character that have been discussed in this section are summarized under (4), regardless of their presumed age.

All other redactional texts of any genre other than *prophetic vision account* are assembled as “non-visionary pieces of texts” (5). As these have not been assessed here, their chronological order is also not considered.

The repeated additions of sometimes large pieces of text indubitably changed the second temple vision in many significant ways. The focus of this thesis on vision

⁸⁷ Refer to Chap. 6.6.

accounts, however, requires limiting the attention to two specific stages of the development of Ezek 40-48: (1) and (2). Another thesis would be needed to examine how other non-visionary additions have affected the second temple vision.

5.4 Structure of the Original Temple Vision Account (40:1-43:10*)

Analogously to the procedure applied for Ezek 8-11, this chapter will first examine the structure of the reconstructed original vision account (40:1-43:10*), and secondly analyse its expanded form with the vision of the river.

The original stratum of the second temple vision has been defined as 40:1-2a*, 3b-37, 47-49; 41:1-4; 42:15, 20b-e; 43:1-2, 4-10. It is framed by a double *inclusio*, and thus structured in three concentric rings; its body, the description and measurements of the temple, is subdivided by location changes in nine scenes of varying length:

40:1-4*	<i>Introduction: From Exile to Jerusalem / Introductory Speech</i>
40:5	Inner Frame: The Wall
40:6-41:4*	<i>Temple Tour in Nine Scenes</i>
40:6-16*	Outer East Gate
40:17-23	Outer North Gate and Outer Court
40:24-27	Outer South Gate
40:28-31*	Inner South Gate
40:32-34	Inner East Gate
40:35-37, 47	Inner North Gate and Inner Court
40:48-49	ʔUlām
41:1-2	Hêkāl
41:3-4	Most Holy Place
42:15, 20*	Inner Frame: The Wall
43:1-2, 4-10	<i>The Return of the Glory / Concluding Speech</i>

Table 17 – Structure 40-43*

5.4.1 The Introduction (40:1-4*)

The “outer ring” of the *inclusio* is formed by the two direct encounters with the divine at the beginning (40:1-2) and the end (43:2, 4-6) of the unit, each culminating

in a speech: one by the man (40:4) and the other by the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה (43:7-10). Both speeches begin by addressing the prophet as “son of man” (40:4b; 43:7b), and both finish with the command to “describe” (נגד; 40:4g₁; 43:10a) the content of the vision “to the House of Israel” (40:4g₂; 43:10a).⁸⁸

Despite this *inclusio* being apparent, it is far less pronounced than those in 1:1-3:15 and 8-11 as there is no report here of the prophet being transported back into exile, and the typical elements of vision frames in Ezekiel (references to the hand of YHWH, the spirit, the exiles) are not taken up in a formal conclusion as in 1:1-3; 3:12-15 and 8:1-3; 11:24-25. As far as can be said, this formal conclusion seems never to have existed for Ezek 40-48 at any redactional stage; the prophet’s return is nevertheless supposed by the explicit command to communicate the vision. The absence of a conclusion gives the account – and thus the whole book – a certain incomplete, or better, open character. This is likely to be a deliberate rhetorical feature, rather than a sign of textual loss.

The introduction in 40:1-4 shows some features that are already familiar from the other vision accounts in the book: 40:1a₁b gives an exact date for the vision. The “hand of YHWH” is said to be on the prophet (הַיָּד הַיְהוָה עָלַי יְדִי־יְהוָה 40:1a₂; cf. 1:3b; 3:14d; 8:1d; 37:1a) as the prophet is brought to “the city” (... וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי שָׁמָּה 40:1c; cf. 8:3cd; 11:24ab)⁸⁹ – the name “Jerusalem” is avoided throughout Chapters 40-48 – “in divine visions” (בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים 40:2a; cf. 1:1d; 8:3d; 11:24bc).

The date, the description of the man and even the hand of YHWH being upon the prophet are all narrated in background sentence forms (*x-qatal* and verbless clauses); so that the entire emphasis of the starting narrative is on the two *wayyiqtol* clauses “and he (YHWH) brought me there” followed by וַהֲבִינֵהּ, “and he (the man) said

⁸⁸ So also Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 506f. (see his synopsis of 40:4 and 43:10 in note 39).

⁸⁹ Compare also Ezek 3:12a, 14ab and 37:1bc.

to me.” Thus the introduction is formulated as a prophetic vision account⁹⁰ with a visionary part (40:1c-3e*) and a speech part (40:4).

5.4.2 The Outer Wall (40:5; 42:15, 20*)

Within 40:1-43:10*, the above illustrated outer frame surrounds the description of the new temple. This description, however, is again enveloped by a second *inclusio* because the tour around the temple area begins and ends at the same eastern gate (40:6ab; 42:15bc) and at the same wall (40:5; 42:20b-e)⁹¹ that encloses the site. This wall therefore surrounds the temple both architecturally and on a narrative level.⁹² Its function is plainly revealed in 42:20e: “to make a separation between the holy and the common,” which sheds light on the guiding principle of the entire building and on its intended interpretation.

5.4.3 The Tour Around the Temple Area (40:6-42:20*)

Similar to Ezek 8, the prophet is led in Chapters 40-42* around the temple area. In Ezek 8, this was structured in partial vision scenes through a rather formalized sequence of elements.⁹³ The same technique can be found here too,⁹⁴ although modified and less strictly applied. After the account has been characterized as “divine vision” through 40:1-4, the typical features for the genre prophetic vision account are applied only sporadically as genre markers; in particular, the scenes, except for the last scene in 41:4, lack a speech part. Although the reader is clearly led

⁹⁰ Despite the fact that Behrens does not recognize 40:1-4 as a prophetic vision account, it contains all the features described by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 32-60, when 40:1c, 3b is seen as a special form of a surprise clause (ibid., 221f.); see above Chap. 1.3.

⁹¹ Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 22.

⁹² So also Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 516; Konkkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 25; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 223, 226.

⁹³ Refer back to Chap. 3.3.2.

⁹⁴ See, also for the following, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 991-993. How van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 506f., 516 considers Ezek 43-46 (especially the legislation!) as the real counterpart to Ezek 8-11, and Chaps 40-42 only as a kind of annex, remains obscure to me.

to perceive Ezek 40-42* generally as a vision, most of its scenes do not actually comply with the rules of the genre, containing only the following three elements:

- 1) Guidance note + place indication
- 2) וַיִּהְיֶה + architectural feature (can be omitted)
- 3) וַיִּמְדַּד + description and dimensions of temple features (variable length)

The beginning of each scene is marked by a guidance note, implying a change of place; but while in 8:5-18 was always וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי used, this construction with *nota obiecti* occurs here only in the introduction (40:1c [3a]) where the subject is still YHWH. During the temple tour, this gives way to the suffixed form וַיְבִיאֵנִי (40:17a, 28a, 32a, 35a, 48a; 41:1a).⁹⁵ Twice, *qal* forms of בּוֹא are employed; both times this is due to the fact that the prophet does not follow the man: in 40:6a (וַיָּבֵאוּ) he is already at the place since 40:1c, whereas in 41:3a (וַיָּבֵא) it is significant that only the man enters the temple building. In contrast to Ezek 8, a greater flexibility in the use of the verb can be observed too, as, obviously synonymously and without any specific motivation, וַיּוֹלֶכְנִי (40:24a; 43:1a) appears twice and וַהֲוֹצִיאֵנִי once (42:[1a,] 15b). The latter verb “he led me out” appropriately occurs after the prophet and the man have reached the most holy – and innermost – place of the temple complex. From then on, naturally, the way leads outwards.

The leading agent in 40:5-43:1 is always the man who is portrayed by his “appearance like bronze” (40:3c) as a supernatural being.⁹⁶ The moving from one location to the next substitutes the note on seeing (וַיֵּרָא), which would genre-typically be expected in a prophetic vision account. The surprise indicator וַיִּהְיֶה, plus verbless clause, occurs in the introduction (40:3b), in the inner frame (40:5a), and in the first two scenes (40:17b, 24b), yet it is omitted thereafter to reappear only in the

⁹⁵ Additionally, the feminine form וַתְּבִיאֵנִי (with רִיחָה as subject) recurs in 43:5b. The shorter spelling וַיְבִיאֵנִי is used in the secondary verse 42:1b.

⁹⁶ Refer to Chap. 9.1.2.

concluding vision of the Glory's return (43:2a). The report of the man measuring the part of the temple under consideration is usually introduced by a *wayyiqtol* clause (וַיִּקְרָא: 40:5c, 6d, 8, 11a, 13a, 19a, 23b, 27b, 28b, 32b, 47a, 48b; 41:1b, 2c, 3b, 4a)⁹⁷ and then continued in a varying number of descriptive verbless clauses.⁹⁸

What makes it questionable to treat the scenes in Ezek 40-42* as vision accounts is the fact that most of them contain no speech part. At the least it can be said that the genre *prophetic vision report* is treated very freely in these chapters; indeed, since the introduction is unmistakably formed as a vision account, the recurrence of certain “genre markers” is sufficient for the reader to recognize Ezek 40-42* as a whole as the report of a vision.

The scenes describe no actions but architecture. Everything is symmetric and ordered; even the sequence of the scenes follows a precise order and rhythm. Three scenes are devoted to the three outer gates (east, north, south), and three to the three inner gates (south, east, north). The scenes of the outer and then the inner northern gate formally include also the respective courtyard, using the courtyard dimensions as transitions between scenes and groups of scenes.⁹⁹ After the gates and courts, the temple building itself is visited in another three scenes: the vestibule (מִלְאָה), the temple hall (הַיְכָל), and the most holy place (קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Occasionally *w^eqatal* clauses occur synonymously: 40:24c, 35b; 42:15d; once as *qatal-x* clause: 40:20c.

⁹⁸ The length of this description varies from zero to seven verbless clauses per measuring note. Every now and then, participial or even verbal clauses appear without structuring function.

⁹⁹ Certain distances of the outer courtyard are measured in between the description of the outer gates (40:17-19, 23, 27), while the inner courtyard is measured before passing on to the temple building (40:47).

¹⁰⁰ Seeing the temple building as one unity, Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 992f; and Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 158 regard the structure of the description in its rhythm of 2 x 3 gates + temple (= 7) as an allusion to the Sabbath and to P's creation account. On the other hand, already Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 109 note 1 notices the connection between the “customary tripartition of the temple building and the 2 x 3 gates, of which each contains 2 x 3 chambers” as “*kaum zufällig*.” The recurrence of the number three is in any case striking.

5.4.3.1 The Outer Gates (40:6-27*)

Of all scenes, the first (outer east gate) contains the most complete measurements: four times *מִן* is repeated as the man measures the dimensions of thresholds and recesses (40:6d-7), the vestibule, pilasters and 2 x 3 recesses (40:8-10), the actual entrance way and the barriers in front of the recesses (40:11-12), and finally the overall length and breadth of the gate complex, with its windows and palm trees (40:13-16).¹⁰¹ Through the east gate, the prophet enters the outer court where thirty chambers and the pavement are noted (40:17-18) and the distance between inner and outer east gate is measured (40:19).

Subsequently, only the main features of the outer north and south gates are mentioned, i.e. the recesses (only 40:21a), the pilasters and the vestibule (40:21b, 24cd), total length and width (40:21cd, 25bc), the windows and palm tree decorations (40:22a, 25a, 26c). The order and wording show only minimal variations. Both descriptions finish with the note that seven steps are leading up to the gate (40:22c, 26a) and that the vestibule of the gate is on the inside, facing the court (40:22d, 26b). In between the two gates and before passing on to the inner gates, the courtyard is measured, in its north-south extension (40:23) and from one southern gate to the other (40:27).

The mentioning of the steps is significant. Steps (*מַעְלֹוֹת*) were also mentioned at the east gate (40:6c), though without revealing their number. The guide had to climb them in order to enter the gate, before beginning the actual measuring and description. Each gate, therefore, has steps and thus constitutes a passageway not only from the outside to the inside but also from a lower to a higher level (and to a greater degree of holiness). These steps are further accentuated by their prominent

¹⁰¹ In view of its important role later in the account, it is no accident that the east gate is given a lead role already at the beginning of the vision. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 229.

position (at the beginning or at the end of a scene) and by the fact that amid the almost entirely verbless description, rare verbal clauses are assigned to the steps, always employing the same verb עלה:¹⁰² in 40:22c as x-*yiqtol* clause (וּבְמַעְלֹת שָׁבַע); in 40:26a as participle (וּמַעְלֹת שָׁבַע עֲלוֹתָיו); in 40:6c MT, the man is said to “go up” the steps (וַיַּעַל). This almost pleonastic emphasis on ascending strongly advises to be careful in seeing in Ezek 40-42 a purely two-dimensional “blueprint” representation. The dimension of height does play a role in Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple.¹⁰³

5.4.3.2 The Inner Gates (40:28-47*)

The subsequent scenes concerning the three inner gates are structured in an even more corresponding way.¹⁰⁴ Their order is different, as the prophet enters the inner court from the south and is guided from there via the east to the north. All gates are initially stated to be of “the same size as the others” (40:28b, 32b, 35b). The description can therefore be shorter. In strictly the same order, recesses, pilasters, vestibule, and surrounding windows are listed, all “the same size” (40:29ab, 33ab, 36ab); then the overall length and width are given (40:29cd, 33cd, 36cd). The vestibules of these gates are again facing the outer court; as a consequence the inner and the outer gates mirror each other (40:31a, 34a, 37a). One palm tree on either jamb decorates every gate (40:31b, 34b, 37b), and each has eight steps (40:31c, 34c, 37c): one more than the outer gates. The steps are here introduced in verbless clauses, yet always in combination with the noun מַעְלָה, so that the emphasis on moving upwards as well as inwards remains intact.

¹⁰² The only other verbal clause within the description of the three outer gates – except of course the bringing and measuring – is 40:21b, employing היה.

¹⁰³ Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 159-161; Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 285. Contra Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 425-427; Zimmerli, “Planungen,” 235; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 992.

¹⁰⁴ For a synopsis of the descriptions of the three inner gates in transcribed Hebrew and English, see Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 529.

5.4.3.3 The Temple Building (40:48-41:4)

After having passed all six gates, the man and the prophet reach the temple building, which is in itself tripartite: the vestibule (מֶלֶךְ), the temple hall (הַיְכָל), and the most holy place (קֹדֶשׁ קְדֹשִׁים). Once again, the three parts are structured alike: first the pilasters are measured (40:48b; 41:1bc, 3b), then the (continually narrowing) width of the doors and sidewalls (40:48c¹⁰⁵; 41:2ab, 3cd) and finally the length and breadth of the room in general (40:49ab; 41:2cd, 4ab). For the *ʿulām*, additionally the two pillars (40:49c) are mentioned as well as steps (40:49c_p), so that the temple building is situated yet again higher than the inner court. Once more, the steps are subject to a verbal clause (יַעֲלֶה; 40:49d).

The ninth scene (the most holy place) is emphasized by the fact that the prophet does not follow the man into it (41:3a: וְאֵין instead of וַיִּבְיָאֵן), which highlights the holiness of the room. It is singled out even more by the only words that are spoken throughout the temple tour.¹⁰⁶ On his way through the gates and courts, Ezekiel has witnessed the perfect harmony of the new temple – perfect but empty: there are no other people in the temple; there is no worship, no divine presence. The whole atmosphere is very quiet, solemn, and static, like the building itself. From the introduction speech (40:4) until the prophet and his guide reach the Most Holy Place (41:4), there is absolute silence. Precisely because the reader would expect speech elements in a vision account, this creates an anticipatory tension, which, when finally dissolved by the words of the man in 41:4d, underscores all the more the distinction and centrality of this place.

The general movement until 41:4 is therefore: from outside to inside, upwards, on increasingly holy ground. In 41:4, the tour around the temple has literally reached

¹⁰⁵ The measuring of the sidewalls is only accounted for in LXX here. Loss of text is suspected in MT (see Appendix D, note 17).

¹⁰⁶ With Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1011.

its climax, and its end. Consequently it is stated in 42:15 that the man “finished the measurements”¹⁰⁷ and “led me outwards” to the beginning point of the journey: to the east gate and the wall around the temple complex. The mentioning of the wall suggests that indeed the outer east gate is meant. It is not quite clear whether the measuring of the surrounding wall implies the man and the prophet walking around it or not.

It is striking that the visionary temple is completely empty: no people other than the prophet and his guide, no furniture, very little ornamentation.¹⁰⁸ All is solemn and quiet; the most holy place is vacant, like a newly built house awaiting its owner to move in.

5.4.4 The Return of the Glory (43:1-10*)

It follows that the revelation of the temple as such is not yet the final climax of this vision. Once the prophet has completed his visit, YHWH is ready to take possession of his new home: the Glory of YHWH returns, as he left years before, by the east gate, to reside once more in the temple. In this respect, the second temple vision is a true counterpart of Ezek 8-11*.

5.4.4.1 The Visionary Part (43:1-2, 4-5)

The concluding part 43:1-10* is written, like the introduction, as a prophetic vision account with the characteristic subdivision in visionary part and speech part.

¹⁰⁷ The statement in 42:15a that the man “had finished measuring the inner temple (וְכִלְּהָ אֶת־מִדּוֹת הַבַּיִת (הַפְּנִימִי),” often translated by “the interior of the temple area” (RSV, NRSV, NIV), could refer more specifically to the temple *building* (so NASB, NJB, NKJ). The term הַבַּיִת is used in Ezek 40-48 both in a narrower sense of “temple building” and in a broader sense of “temple area.” What is meant in each case has to be inferred from the context.

¹⁰⁸ On the emptiness of Ezekiel’s temple, Zimmerli comments, “It is further made clear to the prophet that in the ascent to this holy place nothing else can be important. ... The whole space on the temple mount belongs here ... to God alone.” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 361. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1019. The absence of people in the temple is seen by Liss, “Describe the Temple,” 137-140 and Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 175f. as a further measure to protect its holiness. Diversely, Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 30 interprets it as an additional indication that Ezek 40-42 describes the heavenly temple.

Like all previous scenes, 43:1 begins with a change of location as the prophet is led (הלך *hiph.* 43:1a) by the man to the east gate, by which he had gone out in 42:15bc. In this regard, 43:1 almost seems to repeat 42:15bc, since both times the prophet is led through or to the east gate. Although this echo could indicate the secondary nature of 42:15, 20*, it is also explicable as a stylistic retarding element that announces to the reader the very importance of the scene to come.

After the guidance note, הִנֵּה introduces the sight (43:2a), this time not in a verbless clause as usual but in a participial construction: the Glory of the God of Israel was coming (בָּא) from the east. The only theophanic elements taken up from the previous visions are the “sound like mighty waters” (מִים רַבִּים) 43:2b; 1:24a) and the brightness.¹⁰⁹ This sequence of (1) being brought to another place and (2) the “Glory of the God of Israel” arriving is repeated in inverse order immediately afterward in 43:4-5:

(1)	וַיֹּלְכֵנִי אֶל־הַשַּׁעַר	43:1a
...		
(2)	וַהֲנִיחַ כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא מִדְּרֹם־הַקְּדִים	2a
...		
(2)	וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה בָּא אֶל־הַבַּיִת דְּרֹם־שַׁעַר	4a
...		
(1)	וַתִּשְׂאֲנֵי רוּחַ	5a
	וַתְּבִיֵאֵנִי אֶל־הַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִי	b
((2))	וַהֲנִיחַ מְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה הַבַּיִת:	c

Table 18 – Ezek 43:1-5 Chiasm

The coming (בָּא) of the Glory (now: כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה) is recounted again in 43:4a. Then follows another change of place, yet this time רוּחַ carries the prophet, instead of the man guiding him (perhaps to avoid the prophet passing through the east gate after the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה?). Here again this is followed by הִנֵּה + verbal clause with the Glory as subject (43:5c). The recurrence of the “gate facing east” in 43:1 and 4 adds a

¹⁰⁹ The luminous effect of the Glory is here however expressed in different words: 43:2c: וַהֲאָרְץ הָאֵירָה; 10:4c: מִכְּבוֹד; 1:4d, 27c, 28a₂ (נֹגַהּ); 8:2d (זֹהַר).

parallelism to the chiasmic structure. Interestingly, none of the three clauses on the arrival of the Glory (2a, 4a, 5c) are *wayyiqtol* clauses.

Hence the skilfully arranged verse pairs 43:1-2, 4-5 are no doublets; they function as a twofold visionary part. They narrate the entrance of the **קְבוֹד־יְהוָה** into his sanctuary in gradual steps: from the east, through the eastern gate, into the temple. The pause at the east gate not only is a retarding element that enhances the solemnity of the moment, nor is it only due to the circumstance that Ezekiel has to be moved from the outside to the inside to be able to witness the entire scene – it is first of all mirroring the Glory’s exit, told in the same delaying way, from his old and defiled temple almost 20 years prior (Ezek 10-11*). He comes back the same way, with the same solemnity, as he has left.

5.4.4.2 The Speech Part (43:6-10)

After the second change of location, after the Glory has entered the temple, the prophet hears “someone speaking” to him (**מְדַבֵּר אֵלַי**; 43:6a; cf. 1:28f; 2:2d); thereby the speech part (43:6-10) is introduced. As in the call vision, the speaker is not explicitly identified, though it is made plain that it is YHWH / his Glory who is talking (43:6b serves mainly this purpose). The speech starts, atypical for a vision account, neither with a question nor with an imperative but with a verbless anacoluthon. Loss of text is possible but not accounted for by the versions. As 43:7bc stands now it contains a statement about the temple as the divine dwelling place on earth and the promise that this dwelling will last “forever” (**לְעוֹלָם**). This is repeated in 43:9d. Sandwiched in between (43:7d-8) is a short explanation of the reasons for the divine wrath in the past – interestingly the “corpses of their kings” (7d) had not been mentioned ever before,¹¹⁰ only the dead bodies of the elders that defile the temple in

¹¹⁰ A number of scholars prefer to see the significance of **פְּגָרֵי מְלָכֵיהֶם בְּמוֹתָם** in referring to some sort of cult of the dead or memorial stelae (e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1082f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*,

9:6-7. NRSV translates 43:9a as a jussive (*yiqtol* short form): “now let them put away...” Yet it is just as conceivable, and even more likely, to interpret it as a *yiqtol* long form with future meaning: “now they will put away...” as a matter of fact rather than a request.¹¹¹ The speech finishes in 43:10 by repeating 40:4gh, enriched by an intriguing addition: the effect of the announcement of the temple on the Israelites will be shame for their former misdeeds.¹¹² The meaning of 43:10c in its present form is not clear.

The divine speech in 43:7-10 also alludes to the promises pronounced in 37:21-28: especially through the word לְעוֹלָם (forever), since of its six occurrences in the book three are found in 37:25, 26, 28, and two in 43:7c, 9b.¹¹³ Also the verb שָׁכַן (43:7c, 9b) recalls the noun מִשְׁכְּנֵי in 37:27. The oracle 37:21-28 embraces every promise of restoration: return to the land, restoration of one united nation with Davidic monarchy, purification and the renewal of the covenant. It culminates in these words:

I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; ... and will set my sanctuary [מִקְדָּשִׁי] in the midst of them for evermore [לְעוֹלָם]. My dwelling place [מִשְׁכְּנֵי] shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (37:26-27 NRSV).

In this perspective 40:1-43:10* is an illustration of the fulfilment of these promises;¹¹⁴ the perfect and everlasting temple is a symbol of the new and everlasting covenant YHWH is going to institute with Israel.

583-585; Joyce, “Temple and Worship,” 155; Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 300). This also holds great plausibility.

¹¹¹ Alan Ludwig, “Ezekiel 43:9: Prescription or Promise?,” in *Hear the Word of Yahweh: Essays on Scripture and Archaeology in Honor of Horace D. Hummel*, ed. Dean O. Wenhe, Paul L. Schrieber, and Lee A. Maxwell (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2002), 67-78. Based on syntax, structure, context, and theology, Ludwig argues strongly for the latter interpretation.

¹¹² On the topic of shame, see Chap. 8.1.3.3.

¹¹³ The other occurrence is in Ezek 26:21.

¹¹⁴ “The whole vision of the new temple and its ordinances appears from this point of view as the complete fulfillment of the future which Yahweh had promised for Israel.” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 328. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 977-979. Likewise Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 213; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 121; Konkell, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 170f. It is however possible, as pointed out e.g. by Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 339-418; Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 62f.,

Even though a conclusion in the style of 11:24-25 or 3:12-15 could be expected, the account ends here, quite abruptly. As stated above, it is possible that the vision was meant to have an open ending, finishing with the announcement of restoration and shame, to convey both hope and responsibility to the exilic reader.

5.4.5 Summary

The original account 40:1-43:10* describes a construction of perfect symmetry: a high wall surrounds a double layer of square courtyards with three gates each. Instead of the number four that dominated the first temple vision (Ezek 8-11), the architecture of the new temple is defined by the numbers three (2 x 3 gates, tripartite temple) and, especially in the dimensions of the temple, twenty-five and its multiples (50, 100, 25,000, etc.).¹¹⁵

Alongside the lack of some essential dimensions, the idealized and even unrealistic proportions suggest that this is not about a building project but about a theological message.¹¹⁶ The gates in particular, described in meticulous detail, are undeniably oversized. “The massive size of the gatehouses verges on caricature: their dimensions (25 x 50 cubits) exceed those of the main hall of the Temple (20 x 40 cubits)! ... Such disproportion emphasizes the idea of controlled entry.”¹¹⁷ By means

345, that 37:25-28 is dependent on chaps 40-48 and was written precisely in order to link these chapters closer to the previous parts of the book.

¹¹⁵ Zimmerli, “Planungen,” 237f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 993; also Greenberg, “Program of Restoration,” 190. By contrast, for Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 141-145, the number 100, and not 25, is the basic figure; and Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 158 sees in the dimensions of the Holy of Holiest (20 x 20 cubits) the fundamental unit of the temple structure.

More important than the actual number seems to me the general remark, “When we consider Ezekiel’s measurements, they are round, they are grand, and as such, *they are ideal in character.*” Strong, “Grounding Ezekiel’s Heavenly Ascent,” 199. (His italics).

¹¹⁶ Tuell, “Ezekiel 40-42 as Verbal Icon,” 650. The two aspects are nicely connected by Levison, “Spirit of Life,” 254: “... a mysterious journey of hope, a hope measured not in vague visions of the future. Rather, it is gauged in cubits and handbreadths, measurements intended to press the possibility of restoration into the psyche of exiled Israel, measurements for each wall, precise and deliriously mundane except to those whose deadened imaginations begin to track with the vision.”

¹¹⁷ Greenberg, “Program of Restoration,” 193; see also Corrine L. Patton, “Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct,” in *Ezekiel’s Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Corrine L. Patton and Stephen L. Cook, SBLSymS 31 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 80f.

of the wall and the gates, the temple building is separated from the outside world, well protected from profanation. The temple building and the two courtyards are each on a different level, ascending from the outside toward the inside, thus symbolizing the increasing sacredness of the place.¹¹⁸ For the same reason, the door openings in the building gradually become narrower:¹¹⁹ access to the holy is possible but restricted. The prophet is allowed into the temple building but he may not enter the most holy place, even before the Glory of YHWH is present in it.

The return of the Glory of YHWH, climax of the original account, mirrors the departure narrated in Ezek 10-11*; at the same time, it transcends it through the promise of YHWH's permanent presence henceforth. It stylizes YHWH as Israel's king, implying a renewed theocratic society.¹²⁰ As the divine speech harkens back to prior restoration promises, different narrative and theological strings are reassumed and, as it were, brought to an end.

5.5 Structure of the Enlarged Vision Including the River of Life (40:1-43:10*; 44:1-2; 47:1-12*)

Having assessed the structure of the reconstructed original vision account Ezek 40:1-43:10*, we now move on to its redactional expansion through the vision of the river of life.

A major problem for the analysis of any redactional stage of Ezek 40-48 is that the redaction process in these chapters cannot be entirely clarified in the limits of this thesis. In particular, it is not certain whether 44:1-2; 47:1-10, 12 were ever directly

¹¹⁸ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1019f. On the concept of graded spatial holiness, though mainly in reference to P, see Philip Peter Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*, JSOTSup 106 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 89-114.

¹¹⁹ Greenberg, "Program of Restoration," 193; Konkel, "Zweite Tempelvision," 160.

¹²⁰ Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 3; Strong, "Grounding Ezekiel's Heavenly Ascent," 211. This notion is implicitly present already in Ezek 40-42 as the construction of temples was a privilege and duty of kings.

attached to the temple vision.¹²¹ Even though a relatively early addition of these sections seems plausible, the reconstruction of an intermediate text stage such as 40:1-43:10*; 44:1-2; 47:1-10, 12 remains hypothetical. Besides, textual losses in this process are possible, for example where new insertions replaced the original transitions.

However, the very reason why it is not possible to determine the exact position of 47:1-10, 12 in the chronology of the redaction history of Ezek 40-48, also justifies leaving aside this question. For in spite of the uncertainties it is clear that 47:1-12* refers directly to 40:1-43:10* in that it presupposes, of all subunits within the nine chapters, only the temple with the Glory of YHWH residing in it (40:1-43:10*) and the closure of the east gate (44:1-2).¹²² It seems therefore appropriate to offer, in the following, first a structural analysis of 44:1-2 and 47:1-12*, and then to consider their impact on the original account. No weight will be given to the question whether or not 40:1-43:10*, 44:1-2, and 47:1-12* were directly attached to each other.

The overall structure of the three units can be summarized thus:

40:1-4*	<i>Introduction: From Exile to Jerusalem / Introductory Speech</i>
40:5-42:20*	<i>The New Temple</i>
40:5	Inner Frame: The Wall
40:6-41:4*	Temple Tour in nine Scenes
40:6-16*	Outer East Gate
40:17-23	Outer North Gate and Outer Court
40:24-27	Outer South Gate
40:28-31*	Inner South Gate
40:32-34	Inner East Gate
40:35-37, 47	Inner North Gate and Inner Court
40:48-49	ʔUlām
41:1-2	Hêkāl
41:3-4	Most Holy Place
42:15, 20*	Inner Frame: The Wall
43:1-10	<i>The Return of the 7127 / Promise of Presence</i>

¹²¹ This is for example asserted by Fohrer and Galling, *Ezekiel*, 241-245; Tuell, "Temple Vision," 99; and *Law of the Temple*, 74f. Fohrer assumes a direct connection of 43:1-9; 44:2; 47:1-12 (distinct from 40-42*), and Tuell suggests 40:1-43:7a*; 44:1-2; 47:1-12 as the original sequence. However, I think caution is appropriate in this regard.

¹²² Refer back to Section 5.3.3.1.

44:1-2	Transition: Closure of the East Gate
47:1-12	<i>Effects of the Divine Presence: The River of Life</i>
47:1-6b	Way Out
47:1-5	Visionary Part: The growing River
47:6ab	Speech Part: Question
47:6c-12	Way Back
47:6c-7a	Visionary Part: Returning
47:8-10, 12	Speech Part: Healing of the Water / Life in the River / Life along the River (Concluding Speech)

Table 19 – Structure Ezek 40:1-43:10*; 44:1-2; 47:1-12

5.5.1 The Transition: Closure of the East Gate (44:1-2)

The short unit 44:1-2 is structured as a miniature vision report, as it is subdivided into a visionary part (44:1) and a speech part (44:2). The guidance note in v. 1a employs a new verb, שׁוּב, which appropriately reminds the reader that the prophet has been at the east gate before; it thus links back to 43:1-4 and to the return of the Glory.¹²³ The speech is introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי (2a). Despite the visionary form, the focus is not so much on a sight but undoubtedly on the spoken words.

It is not clear, in 44:1a, who the subject of וַיִּשָּׁב is. The last mentioned agent (in 43:7a) is YHWH; however all previous guidance notes refer to the man, and there is no evident reason why this should be different here. As suggested above, the originally intended subject of both 44:1 and 44:2 probably is the man.¹²⁴

The point of this section is made unmistakably clear as during these two verses it is repeated three times that “the gate was/shall be shut” (44:1b, 2bf). Ezekiel’s observation when he returns to the east gate “and it was shut” (1b) reappears both at the beginning and at the end of the speech (44:2bf), with 44:2b and 2f forming a chiasm (וַתִּהְיֶה סָגוּרָה / ... סָגוּרָה וְהָיְתָה). The order to keep the gate shut implicates the prohibition of opening or using it (2cd). The reason for the restriction is given, in an

¹²³ Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 613.

¹²⁴ See above, 5.3.3.1. This distinction is not as fundamental as it may seem, “since the guide served as an authorized messenger of Yahweh.” Ibid., 614. In fact, the guide acts in YHWH’s stead (see Chap. 9.1.2).

antithetic parallelism to 44:2d (“no one shall enter by it”), in 2e, “for YHWH, the God of Israel, has entered by it” (כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא בּוֹ / וְאִישׁ לֹא־יָבֹא בּוֹ). Thus this prohibition gives particular weight to the concept of spatial holiness. It extends the most sacred space reserved for YHWH from the most holy place to the entire central horizontal axis of the temple, comprising the temple building and the east gates.¹²⁵

5.5.2 The River of Life (47:1-12*)

The closure of the east gate is presupposed by 47:1-12. In opposition to all other vision accounts in Ezekiel, verbless clauses are rare in the vision of the river; yet similar to 1:4-28, the language contains difficulties.¹²⁶ The narrative is structured in two sections of comparable length (47:1-6b, 6c-12; Table 20). Both sections are complete vision accounts but the first section puts all emphasis on the vision part, while the second one focuses on the speech part. The centre parts (speech part 1 and visionary part 2) are kept to a minimum. Thus the two sections complement each other in such a way that they appear as one single vision account.¹²⁷

<i>Section 1 (47:1-6b) – The way out</i>	<i>Section 2 (47:6c-12) – The way back</i>
Visionary part: - Guidance formula (1a) - וְהָיָה + participial clause (1b) - description (1cd) Visionary part: - Guidance formula (2ab) - וְהָיָה + participial clause (2c) - Alternated measuring and leading, for four times (3, 4ab, 4cd, 5)	Visionary part: - Guidance formula (6cd) - וְהָיָה + verbless clause (7a) - [infinitive in 7ap]
Speech Part: - וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי (6a) - Question (6b)	Speech Part in three sections: - וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי (8a) - Way of the water (8b-f) - Life <i>in</i> the water; fish; fishermen (9-10) - Life <i>outside</i> the water / trees (12)

Table 20 – Structure Ezek 47:1-12

¹²⁵ Cf. the figure “Spine of Sacred Space” in *ibid.*, 573 Figure 8.

¹²⁶ Block lists “uncharacteristic lexical forms, doublets, repetitions, grammatical anomalies, substantive infelicities, and awkward interruptions” with examples: *ibid.*, 689f. note 45.

¹²⁷ Zwickel, “Tempelquelle,” 142f. sees in this unusual structure a reason to apply redaction criticism. However, considering that 47:1-12 as a whole is already redactional, his arguments are nullified.

5.5.2.1 The Way Out: The Growing Water (47:1-6b)

The first section has a twofold visionary part, i.e. both the guidance formula (47:1a, 2ab) and הַנָּהַר plus the description of a sight (mainly in participial clauses) recur twice. This is due to a narrative and theological necessity: the water has to be observed in two different places. First, its origin from the temple has to be stated in an unmistakable way; then, however, the prophet who must not pass the east gate cannot simply follow the course of the water eastwards but has to take the longer way through the north gate and along the wall until he sees the water again trickling out south of the east gate. This long-winded introduction seems the only way to narrate, mindful of YHWH's presence,¹²⁸ both the origin of the stream and its flowing into the land while at the same time doing justice to the ban of using the east gate (44:2).

As in 44:1, the identity of the guide is not made explicit; the reader can only infer this from earlier guidance notes in Chapters 40-42 or, retrospectively, from 47:3ap where the man is unequivocally mentioned. The two הַנָּהַר clauses (1b, 2c) are constructed as parallelisms with the following design: הַנָּהַר־מַיִם + participle + מִיָּן + location.

47:1b: הַנָּהַר־מַיִם יֵצְאוּ מִתַּחַת מִקְדָּשׁ הַבַּיִת קְדִימָה

2c: הַנָּהַר־מַיִם מִן־הַקֶּתֶף הַיְמָנִית

Once the water has flowed out of the temple area, its miraculously rapid rising to the size of a river is told in an alternating of measuring and leading through the water (47:3-5). Here, the aim of the measuring (without specifying the unit “1000” refers to) is not giving dimensions any more, but covering a distance after which the depth of the stream is assessed again – with the prophet's body functioning as measuring device. This sequence is repeated climactically four times: three times

¹²⁸ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 279.

Ezekiel passes through the increasingly deeper water until, the fourth time, passage by foot has become impossible.¹²⁹

In sum, the first visionary part (47:1-5) describes a mysterious stream of water issuing from the temple and quickly rising to a river too deep to cross. The speech part of this section, introduced by וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי (v. 6a), does not give any explanation as to the significance of this sight; it consists merely of one question, which is already familiar to the reader from Ezek 8, “Have you seen, son of man?” (47:6b).¹³⁰ In Ezek 8, this question was repeated four times in reference to the cultic aberrations of Israel and it inaugurated merciless divine judgement that began precisely at the defiled sanctuary. Here the question is asked only once – after measuring the river four times¹³¹ – and it inaugurates a divine gift of life and healing that again derives from the sanctuary.

5.5.2.2 The Way Back: The Explanation (47:6c-12)

It is only the second section (47:6c-12) that explains the nature and aim of the mystical river. With inverted proportions, as compared to the first section, the visionary part of the second section is reduced to a minimum while its speech part is considerably expanded. While in 47:1-6b the prophet and the man walked eastward away from the temple, now Ezekiel is being led back towards it (וַיֹּלְכֵנִי וַיְשׁוּבֵנִי 6cd). A fresh וַיִּהְיֶה plus verbless clause (7a) shifts the focus from the water itself to a new sight: the “very many trees” along the river. Like the inexplicably rapid rising of the water, the sudden appearance of trees ought to be granted to a vision account.

¹²⁹ “At this point, the meaning of the measurements is clear: this stream is, quite literally, immeasurable.” Odell, *Ezekiel*, 520.

¹³⁰ Ezek 8:6b, 12b, 15b, 17b. The phrase in 8:6b is participial, while all the others are identical *qatal-x* clauses.

¹³¹ Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 279 sees in the number four the governing *Strukturprinzip* of the pericope.

The speech part (47:8-12), once again introduced by וַיֵּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים (8a), has three paragraphs. The first topic addressed is the way of the water across the Judean desert toward the Dead Sea. This part is formulated mainly in narrative *w^eqatal* clauses (8cdf). The last of these uncovers a first task of the river and introduces a theme word of this speech: healing (רפא).¹³² The first entity to be “healed” is the water of the Dead Sea.

The next paragraph (47:9-10) is subdivided by the future *tempus marker* וְהָיָה (9ae, 10a) in three parts. A new theme word for the first part is introduced in 9b₁: life/living (חַיָּה [noun]: 9b₁; חַיָּה [verb]: 9b₂h). In the first two parts attention is centred on life inside the water (swarming creatures 9b₁c; fish 9e) that is brought about by the river (9dfi). This, of course, is a consequence of the healing power of the water announced in 8ef (9fg). The sentence structures in these passages are entwined to the point of being ambiguous. For example, וְחַיָּה in 9b₂ refers back to חַיָּה שֶׁנִּפְשָׁהּ in 9b₁, with two subordinate clauses in between.¹³³ Another וְהָיָה (10a) leads on to the economic consequences of such waterlife bounty. Abundance of fish means food for humans. Therefore this paragraph draws a line from the healing of the water to the unspecified swarming creatures, more specifically to fish, and finally to man. The water from the temple is thus able to provide life for many different species “wherever it goes.” To underline this, the adjective combination רַב מְאֹד (very many) from 7a is taken up twice (9e, 10d). Verse 11 seems to express concern for the salt industry of the Dead Sea in the face of such promises and has been qualified as secondary.

¹³² רפא: 47:8f, 9g, [11a,] 12f. Other theme words throughout the entire unit are מים: 47:1bd, 2c, 3c [*bis*], 4b[*bis*]d, 5de, 8bf, 9f, 12e_p and נחל: 47:5be, 7a, 9di, 12a.

¹³³ The “chaotisch wirkende Syntax” is possibly in onomatopoeic imitation of the swarming fish described. Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 279.

Especially in this section, there are significant terminological parallels with both creation accounts in Gen 1-3 and with the Priestly flood narrative:¹³⁴ the term *חַיָּה*, “living creature” (Ezek 47:9b₁) appears frequently in all three of the mentioned accounts (Gen 2:7, 19 [“J”]; Gen 1:20, 24, 30; 9:12, 15, 16 [P]); and the rare verb *שָׂרַץ* (to swarm, Ezek 47:9c) recurs in the Priestly creation and flood narratives (Gen 1:20, 21; 7:21; 8:17; 9:7 [all P]).¹³⁵ The combination *כָּל-חַיָּה* to indicate the sum of animate creatures appears only in the Priestly flood account (Gen 9:12, 15, 16) and in Ezek 47:9, while the terms *חַיָּה* and *שָׂרַץ* are used together only in Gen 1:20 [P] and Ezek 47:9. On the other hand, the motif of the river of paradise occurs in Gen 2:10-14, an insertion in the older creation account (where trees also play a significant role).¹³⁶ The sum of these allusions to creation, its reversion in the great flood, and new creation certainly underlines the innovative power of YHWH; it suggests above all that the process of healing in 47:1-12* is understood as a new creation, or re-creation after the judgement.

Finally, with the last paragraph (47:12) the focus of the speech returns to the initially mentioned trees (7a). The water is capable of producing life even outside the river itself, by irrigating the land. The trees are now classified as “food trees” (*עֵץ-מֵאֲכָל* 12a) so that their use for human life is immediately evident. The still realistic promises “their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail” (12bc) are climactically outdone by the assurance of fresh fruit every month (12d) and, in return

¹³⁴ Steven Tuell, “The Rivers of Paradise: Ezekiel 47:1-12 and Genesis 2:10-14,” in *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner*, ed. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 17; Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 331.

¹³⁵ The only further recurrences are: Ex 1:7 [P]; 7:28; Lev 11:29, 41, 42, 43, 46 [all P]; Ps 105:30.

¹³⁶ The identification of the river in Ezek 47:1-12 with the river of paradise is suggested e.g. by Levenson, *Theology*, 25-34; Tuell, “Rivers of Paradise,” 171-189; Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 333f. Levenson gives as further OT examples of this kind of tradition (which he links back to Canaanite myths): Isa 8:6-7; 33:20-24; Zeph 14:8; Joel 4:17-18. For more bibliographical notes, see Tuell, “Rivers of Paradise,” 171f. note 1. It should be mentioned, however, that Gen 2:10-14 is commonly regarded as an insertion in its context; according to Zwickel, “Tempelquelle,” 144-146, it is in fact dependent on Ezek 47:1-12. Zwickel sees the temple source instead in continuation with the bronze sea in the pre-exilic temple and connected to the Mesopotamian idea of the *apsû*, the life-giving freshwater ocean (ibid., 148-154). See also Victor Hurowitz, “YHWH's Exalted House: Aspects of the Design and Symbolism of Solomon's Temple,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day, LHB/OTS 422 (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 80f.

to the theme word רפא (47:8f, 9g, [11a] 12f), the healing power of the trees' leaves (12f). All this, again, is said to be possible as a result of the origin of the water from the sanctuary (12e). The sequence of *x-yiqtol* clauses (beginning in 10c) expresses not so much an action, but rather an enduring state: stable and firm as trees ought to be. This sequence finishes with the pending sentence construction of v. 12e, which links back to the very beginning of the speech in v. 8b through the combination of מים with a participle of יצא.¹³⁷ The וְהָיָה in v. 12f matches the three וְהָיָה in the second paragraph (9ae, 10a). This last clause takes up words from the present passage (פְּרִיּוֹ 12cf; מֵאֲכָל 12af; עֲלֵהוּ 12bf) as well as the theme word רפא (8f, 9g, [11a,] 12f). By means of these interconnections, the speech appears as a compact unit, even though there is no formal conclusion to the narrative as such.

5.5.2.3 The Effect of the Expansion

In the same way as the abandonment of Jerusalem signified death and destruction that, not by accident, commenced at the temple (Ezek 9), so YHWH's dwelling in the temple conveys healing and prosperity, which is symbolized by the river that flows from the temple door through the desert of Judah to the Dead Sea, bringing life and fertility everywhere.¹³⁸

If it can be presumed that the temple vision at some point of its redaction history ended with 47:1-12*, then it constitutes a decisively more positive finale of the enlarged temple vision: while 43:10 ended on the note of Israel's shame as they receive the outline of the sanctuary and realize their former aberrations, 47:1-12 concludes with the picture of overflowing abundance and hope. The people's

¹³⁷ 47:8b: הַמַּיִם הֹאֲלֵה יוֹצְאִים... “This water is flowing out...”
 47:12e_{pe}: הַמַּיִם יוֹצְאִים... מֵיְמִי... “the water for them, it is flowing out...”

¹³⁸ Surpassing prior, more general promises, “this vision specifically connects Temple and fertility and singles out for transformation the most barren tract of land – the wilderness of Judah – and the body of water most inhospitable for life, the Dead Sea.” Greenberg, “Program of Restoration 199. See also Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 691f.

misdeeds not only belong to the past, as in 43:7-10*, but they seem completely forgotten. As in the original account, the vision does not show a programme to be implemented by the people but a reality YHWH will bring about when and how he wishes.¹³⁹

5.6 *The Intention(s) of the Discussed Parts of Ezek 40-48*

As we have taken into account only the formally visionary parts of Ezek 40-48, the text presents itself, despite the redactional interventions, quite straightforwardly. In the original account 40:1-43:10* the prophet is shown a new temple; he learns the dimensions of the enclosing wall, of the symmetric-concentric structure of the courtyards with their massive gates, and of the temple building.¹⁴⁰ The guided tour progresses climactically inward as well as upward, on increasingly sacred ground. Once the visit is completed, the Glory of YHWH enters the temple by the eastern gate and promises to remain there forever.

The interpretation of 40:1-43:10* in the literature ranges from a concrete restoration project¹⁴¹ to the display of a purely heavenly reality.¹⁴² We have already noticed¹⁴³ that the disproportional gates, along with the ideal layout and the lack of necessary measurements strongly suggest that this is not a realistically to-be-built model temple but a theological message. With this background, it is worth

¹³⁹ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 1199, 1201 accurately observes that immediately at the sanctuary, there is not a large amount of water but only a small source, which then grows miraculously fast into plentiful abundance. This can be interpreted as a simile for God's blessings. On the motif of the growing waters and its usage in later traditions, see Marco Nobile, "Il motivo della crescita delle acque in Ez 47,1-12 e in Sir 24,30-31 e suoi sviluppi successivi," in *Saggi su Ezechiele*, Spicilegium 40 (Rome: Antonianum, 2009), 93-108.

¹⁴⁰ The role of geometry and measurements in "taming the wildness" and "calm the disturbances" is underlined by Simon, "Geometric Vision," 411-438 (quotes on p. 412).

¹⁴¹ For example, Levenson, *Theology*; Greenberg, "Program of Restoration," 181-208; Clements, *Ezekiel*, 176-181. Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 151-153 interprets the second temple vision in terms of "human geography," as the spatial organization of a new society; it asserts in particular "yhwh's [*sic*] territorial claim as the only King of Israel" (p. 3; her italics).

¹⁴² For example, Tuell, "Ezekiel 40-42 as Verbal Icon," 649-661; and Joyce, "Ezekiel 40-42," 22-32 interpret Ezek 40-42 as a vision of the heavenly temple. A middle position is taken by Strong, "Grounding Ezekiel's Heavenly Ascent," 192-202.

¹⁴³ In section 5.4.4.4.

mentioning again that the temple is empty when the prophet visits it. This underlines that, as much as the tragic fate of the old temple was caused by human sin, the holiness of the new temple and the renewed presence of YHWH in it are not initiated by anything Israel could have done on their own account.¹⁴⁴ The visionary temple was not built by them – nor is it their worship that attracts the presence of the Glory. Israel is not even overtly asked to build a temple;¹⁴⁵ they are to receive and acknowledge the dimensions of the temple revealed by YHWH (43:10).

In effect, the symmetry and protection of the sanctuary represent the order YHWH is going to establish.¹⁴⁶ This order will ensure that defilement through the inappropriate contact between *holy* and *common* will not repeat itself; therefore YHWH will never have to abandon this temple. Also implied is that the sanctuary will be safe from future invasions and desecration by foreign aggressors. “The whole temple area is constructed in a way which will remove all possible defilements as far from YHWH as possible.”¹⁴⁷ In this view, it also becomes clearer why only certain elements of the temple are measured or even mentioned: the entire building complex aims at protecting the most holy place; the description refers only to what is relevant to its underlying theological programme: “to make a separation between the holy and the common” (42:20e).

All this involves a strong focus on holiness. Ezek 40:1-43:10* conveys holiness as a divine quality *totaliter aliter* to human categories. YHWH is holy

¹⁴⁴ “The disorder of the temple which was revealed in the vision of Chapter 8 must not recur. The outline in Chapters 40f in the first place completely disregards those who will serve in this temple and who, according to Chapter 8, were actually responsible for the disorder. It concentrates decisively on the structural aspect and speaks of the new symmetry of the temple which is promised to the restored nation.” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 345; German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 994.

¹⁴⁵ So also Fohrer and Galling, *Ezekiel*, 221; Zimmerli, “Planungen,” 234; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 542; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 214; Tuell, “Ezekiel 40-42 as Verbal Icon,” 652-654; and Robert W. Jenson, *Ezekiel*, BTCB (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009), 302f. Contrarily (but referring to 43:11!) Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 27f; Strong, “Grounding Ezekiel’s Heavenly Ascent,” 201f.

¹⁴⁶ Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 235 calls Ezek 40-42 a “celebration” and the temple “a metaphor for God’s new work of liberation and restoration for his people.”

¹⁴⁷ Renz, “Zion Tradition,” 94.

because he is God and not human. Therefore, if the temple shall be suitable to accommodate the divine presence, it has to reflect and to reveal the transcendence and “separateness” of YHWH.¹⁴⁸ However, “Ezekiel inhabits, if only for the duration of the vision, sacred space and time.”¹⁴⁹ This means, he is not only the messenger of words but also the first of the Israelites to *experience* the new reality and in this way he personally becomes a sign and a living guarantee for his audience.

Israel will be sanctified by God through the presence of his sanctuary, his sanctuary will be sanctified by the presence of his glory, his holy name and he himself will be sanctified through an exhibition of his power and renewal of the situation of Israel.¹⁵⁰

The expansion of 40:1-43:10* through 44:1-2; 47-1:12* does not diminish the abovementioned aims. Rather, the two additions each underline one particular aspect that is already present in the original account.

The permanent closure of the east gate sends out two signals: firstly, the prohibition of using the gate, “for YHWH, the God of Israel, has entered by it” (44:2e) highlights once more the concept of holiness.¹⁵¹ The emphasis on the separation between holy and profane (42:20) is enhanced through the prohibition: No human may walk along the path that YHWH has decided not to use anymore.

Secondly, 44:1-2 strongly underlines that YHWH has no intentions of abandoning his temple again. The closed door symbolizes the divine resolution to stay; it is “a visual affirmation of the promises expressed verbally in 43:7, 9.”¹⁵² Since YHWH is present in the sanctuary, he is also approachable (through the cult). The closure of the gate, through which the Glory of YHWH returned into the temple, simultaneously underscores the respect humans owe to the divine (therefore the

¹⁴⁸ Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 159-161. In the same sense, Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48* refers to the visionary temple as a “colony of heaven” (p. 235) and a “monument to the holiness of God” (p. 236).

¹⁴⁹ Odell, *Ezekiel*, 536.

¹⁵⁰ Ka Leung Wong, “Profanation/Sanctification and the Past, Present and Future of Israel in the Book of Ezekiel,” *JSOT* 28 (2003): 232.

¹⁵¹ So also Jenson, *Ezekiel*, 313.

¹⁵² Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 614.

transcendence of YHWH) and the presence (therefore immanence) of YHWH amongst his people.¹⁵³

Finally, the consequences of the re-established divine presence in the sanctuary (43:1-10) for the land are effectively illustrated by 47:1-12*. The vision of the river completes 40:1-43:10* in so far as it spells out the healing and blessing effects of YHWH's new presence and the restored relationship between God and his people: "The Temple is the mechanism for the disbursal of abundant grace for the whole population. When the presence of God has returned to the navel of the world, the Land is transfigured through the life-giving stream thus renewed."¹⁵⁴

In comparison to the original temple vision, 47:1-12 has more fantastic traits. In alluding to the creation accounts as well as to the Priestly flood account it underlines on the one hand the creative supremacy of YHWH. On the other hand, these references also advocate an interpretation of the healing that the river brings as a re-creation after the judgement. This latter aspect is congruent with other radical images of restoration in Ezekiel,¹⁵⁵ such as the resurrection of the bones (37:1-14) or the gift of a new heart to Israel (11:19-20; 36:26-27), which are tantamount to a new creation. In Stevenson's words,

[This] vision creates a new world. It is a healed world, a cleansed world, a holy world. ... It is a world with one community in its own Land, with its own temple, and YHWH, the only King of Israel, in the midst. ... [Ezek 40-48] is an expression of hope: hope in the transcendent reality of God; hope in the continued existence of a people; hope that there is a future; hope that exile is not the last word. The last word is that YHWH is in the midst. YHWH is there.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ On this theme, see also Joyce, "Temple and Worship," 154f.

¹⁵⁴ Levenson, *Theology*, 13, cf. 11-14, 28. Tuell, "Rivers of Paradise," 182-186 also gives extra-biblical ancient Near Eastern examples to demonstrate that "material blessing and fertility belong to the river image as signs of divine presence" (p. 186; see also Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 331-333).

¹⁵⁵ As noticed also by Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 236.

¹⁵⁶ Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 159f. Although Stevenson is referring to Ezek 40-48 in its present form, her summary is fitting also for this stage of redaction.

6. Relations among the Vision Accounts in Ezekiel

6.1 *A Visual Overview*

As a result of the previous chapters' analyses the original and redactional layers of Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 37:1-14; 40-48 have become sufficiently clear to proceed to the next step. This chapter will examine more closely the diachronic relationship between the main layers. This involves the question of literary dependences and influences as well as that of a relative and, where possible, absolute chronology. From the viewpoint of the chronological succession of the main stages in the redaction history of Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 37:1-14; 40-48, the process of the compilation of the book of Ezekiel as a coherent text entity will also become clearer. This will provide the basis, in the subsequent chapter, for studying selected prominent themes present in various stages of the development.

To give an outline of the complex redaction process within the major vision accounts in Ezekiel, the most important influences and interrelations are anticipated in Chart 2 below. The redaction history of each vision account (1:1-3:15; 8-11; 37:1-14; 40-48), as it has been discerned during the redaction-critical process in the previous chapters,¹ is represented there by the four large horizontal arrows, along which the main redactions and additions are displayed in chronological order.² The chart is subdivided vertically in three periods: the "original writings" by the early-exilic prophet Ezekiel,³ the phase during which the texts were redacted and expanded, and finally the present texts.

¹ Refer to 2.2, 2.7, 3.2, 4.2, and 5.3.

² Independent glosses of less than four verses are not included in the chart, nor is the textual-critical period accounted for. The position of the partial-judgement revision (Ezek 9) is arbitrary (hence the only dotted border) because this redaction cannot be dated (refer to Chap. 3.2.2).

³ I am using the name "Ezekiel" here to refer to the author of the earliest layers in the same way as the last redactor of the first Gospel is called "Matthew." I believe that the "original writings" make most sense if a prophetic author of priestly background is assumed, who was deported to Babylonia in 597. Whether or not his name "really" was Ezekiel, is irrelevant.

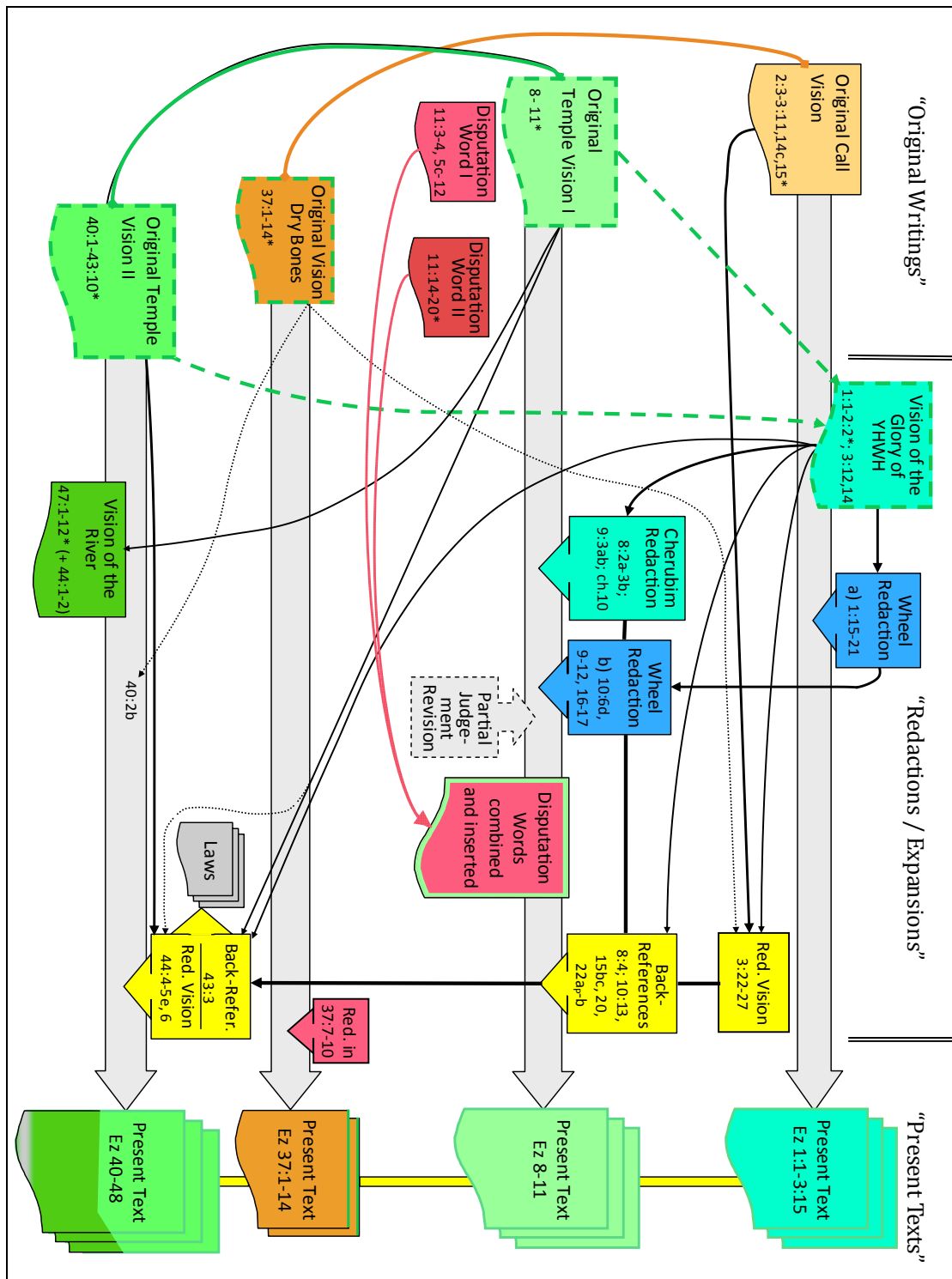


Chart 2 – Interrelated Redaction History

The black arrows indicate that a given layer or redaction influences another; for example the wheel redaction in 10:9-17* copies elements from the wheel redaction in 1:15-21. Thicker connection lines signify a close relationship of two or more layers including similarity in intention and/or redactional method. Those accounts

that feature the characteristic visionary frame, or introduction,⁴ are bordered by a green dotted line; the same green lines connect the visions concerned with the Glory of YHWH. Similarities are further marked by the choice of colour, for example the two temple visions are represented in similar shades of green and the two disputation words of Ezek 11 in two different shades of red.

The stages represented above shall now be examined as to their connections with other layers, as well as to the question of literary dependence (where applicable) and that of their probable date (where possible). For better clarity in this chapter's discussion, the majority of layers have been clustered into three groups: the texts authored by the sixth century prophet Ezekiel (the "original writings" at the left of the chart); the redactions related to the vision of the Glory of YHWH (the cherubim redaction and the wheel redactions, coloured turquoise and blue in the chart); and later harmonizing redactions (the "redactional vision accounts" and explicit back-references, in yellow). Not included in these three groups are the two largest expansions – the vision of the Glory of YHWH and the vision of the river – which will be treated on their own, respectively before and after the second group.

6.2 *The "Original Writings"*

On the left side of the graphic, six texts are represented that are regarded as original: the reconstructed earliest versions of the four vision accounts – the call narrative (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*), the first temple vision (8:1-11:25*), the vision of the bones (37:1-14*), and the second temple vision (40:1-43:10*); additionally, the two disputation words (11:3-4, 5c-12; 11:14-20*), which later were incorporated into the first temple vision, as illustrated by the red arrow. In the previous chapters, the development of these six independent writings toward the present texts was outlined.

⁴ On this frame, see below, Section 6.3.3.

At this point, the question is that of their date and, following from this, whether an authorship by “Ezekiel” can reasonably be assumed for these basic accounts. The second aim of this section is to verify whether there are any connections – and if so, of what these consist – between the vision accounts on a non-redactional level.

6.2.1 The Call Vision (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*)

6.2.1.1 Relationship with Other Layers

At first glance, the original call vision of the eating of the scroll and the prophet’s commission to go to the “rebellious house” (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*) stands somewhat alone in the network of interrelations. While the *fact* of a call of the prophet Ezekiel is certainly presupposed by the rest of the book, specific motifs or phrasings are recognizably taken up, in the vision accounts,⁵ only by the redactional account 3:22-27.⁶ Even the vision of the Glory (1:1, 3b-2:2*; 3:12-14*), which as an expansion to the call narrative naturally draws on it in a general sense, is not significantly related to it in its content, style, or message.⁷ As a minimum it can be affirmed that 2:3-3:15* is older than the vision of the Glory.

However, when looking beyond mere lexical similarities, it becomes evident that the call vision has much in common with the vision of the bones (37:1-14*).⁸

6.2.1.2 Date

Although two dates occur at the beginning of 1:1-3:15, redaction criticism has shown that none of them belongs to the original call vision.⁹ There is however an

⁵ Outside a vision context, e.g. the refrain *כִּי בֵּית מְרִי הָיְתָה* returns in 12:2-3. Moreover, Israel’s almost hereditary sin will be developed more at length when Israel’s history is narrated, in the allegories of Chaps 16 and 23 and in the account of Chap. 20. The latter is connected to the call narrative also by the phrase “they are/were not willing to listen to me” (*לֹא יָאָבִוּ לְשָׁמֹעַ*), which occurs only in 3:7b and 20:8. On the concepts of history underlying Ezek 16; 23 and 20, see Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*.

⁶ Refer to Section 6.6.2.1.

⁷ Refer back to Section 2.2.2 on the differences between these two layers.

⁸ Refer to Section 6.2.4.2. The connection is expressed in the chart through similar colours.

⁹ Refer back to Section 2.2.

astounding tendency in the literature to accept the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile rather uncritically as the date of the call vision,¹⁰ sometimes even where 1:2 is recognized as a gloss. It is beyond our knowledge whether 1:2 contains some truth about the original date of the call narrative, or whether the editor simply conjectured a date sometime before the one given in 8:1 (in the sixth year).¹¹ Certainly, as a gloss, the content of 1:2 should be treated with caution. The phrase "of the exile of King Jehoiachin" (לְגֵלוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹאָכִין) 1:2b) is different – more distant and at the same time less ambiguous – than the wording "of our exile" (לְגֵלוֹתֵנוּ) in 33:21 and 40:1.¹² Hence before the insertion of 1:2, the reader either was able to infer the intended reference point spontaneously or had to wait until 33:21 for explication. It would seem reasonable that, as long as Jehoiachin was alive, contemporary readers naturally understood the dates as referring to the young ruler's exile, since Jehoiachin was obviously felt, despite his official deposition, the legitimate king.¹³ If this is true, then 1:2 was added after Jehoiachin's death because only from then on the dates needed further clarification in order to remain unequivocal.¹⁴

In sum, the text itself offers no reliable date for the original call vision. However, nothing in Ezek 2:3-3:15* gives serious reason to doubt its authenticity; on the contrary it seems indeed to be an early part of the book. One would, for instance, expect to find hints of the siege of Jerusalem if it was ongoing or of the destruction

¹⁰ For example, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 113-115; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41, 43; Wilson, "Prophecy in Crisis," 120; Fuhs, *Ezekiel*, 21; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel*, IBC (Louisville: John Knox, 1990), 15f; Vawter and Hoppe, *New Heart*, 11, 24; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 22f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 85, 87. The fact that the date in 1:2 fits so well in the book's overall chronology is not yet proof for its authenticity.

¹¹ Editorial invention is contended e.g. by Lang, "Erste und letzte Vision," 225f.

¹² In the present book, 1:2 provides the reference point for the entire dating system: of the fourteen dates in Ezekiel (1:1; 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1), only three explicitly give a reference point: 1:2; 33:21, and 40:1.

¹³ W. F. Albright, "The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Pre-exilic History of Judah, with Some Observations on Ezekiel," *JBL* 51 (1932): 91-93; followed e.g. by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 43f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 86.

¹⁴ According to 2 Kings 25:27-30, his imprisonment lasted 37 years (597-560); therefore, the last Judean king outlived Ezekiel's ministry as a prophet.

of the city if it had already taken place. Since no signs of this can be identified, it is assumed that 2:3-3:15* was written before, or by, 588 (the beginning of the siege).

On the other hand, the call narrative is not necessarily the earliest text in Ezekiel although it narrates the earliest event. An indication of this is the openness of the account; its purpose lies beyond the text unit itself. Note that the main instruction given to the newly appointed prophet, to speak, is not executed within 2:3-3:15*. The “words of lamentation, mourning, and woe” (2:10c) need yet to be proclaimed, and then to be fulfilled. In addition, the prophet’s obedience even in performing strange and bizarre actions is similar to the sign acts in the following chapters. For these reasons, it can be presumed that the call narrative stood at the beginning of an early collection of Ezekiel’s writings (not yet including the later oracles of deliverance), as an introduction to and authorization of his message. Whilst this supposes the priority or simultaneity of other Ezekielian writings, it remains reasonable to attribute 2:3-3:15* to the period before the conquest of Jerusalem and therefore to Ezekiel, i.e. to the author of the first texts assembled in the book thus named.

6.2.2 The Original First Temple Vision (8-11*)

The first temple vision is dated in 8:1 MT on the fifth day of the sixth month in the sixth year. Unlike in the call vision, the date is here part of the original layer.¹⁵ At the least, it can be supposed that Ezek 8-11* was not written earlier than the date in 8:1. *Terminus post quem* is therefore the 28th September 593.¹⁶

On the other hand, a visionary prediction of the abandonment and destruction of Jerusalem and the desecration of the temple would have been pointless after the

¹⁵ Refer back to Chap. 3.2.6.

¹⁶ Methods of calculation for transferring the dates into our modern system are controversial. This thesis uses the results of Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*. On Ezek 8:1, see pp. 59f.

historical events of 587.¹⁷ Considering the tense political situation and the risky coalition tactics advanced by Zedekiah in the years prior to the siege, in fact no supernatural gift of divination was needed to foretell the catastrophe. Bearing in mind that in Jerusalem in those years there was an influential group that promoted resistance to Babylon with resort to temple-theological motifs such as the inviolability and divine protection of Jerusalem,¹⁸ the vision of YHWH's abandoning the sanctuary acquires an even stronger prophetic force.

Hence, regardless of whether one trusts in principle the dates in Ezekiel or not,¹⁹ the original layer of the first temple vision (8-11*) is in effect plausibly situated in the period of 593-588 and can therefore be attributed to "Ezekiel."

The account of Ezek 8-11* is presupposed by the second temple vision 40:1-43:10*²⁰ and, of course, by its own expansions and redactions.

6.2.3 The Two Discussion Words in Ezek 11

Chapter 3.2.1 has determined that 11:1-21 consists of two originally independent disputation words that were editorially combined and inserted into the temple vision at a later time (see the differently shaded red elements in the graphic).

¹⁷ H. de Jong, "Biblical Prophecy" argues precisely the opposite, namely that all prophecies of unconditional judgement are scribal products *ex eventu*, giving the standard ancient Near Eastern reason of divine wrath for a catastrophe that has already happened. In the case of Ezekiel, however, the difference between *ante eventum* and *ex eventu* is somewhat blurred, since in the decade 597-587 the catastrophe was written on the wall for everyone to see (and for some – the first *golah* – it had already happened). Some people of course still hoped to divert the disaster, but no divine inspiration was necessary to reach the conclusion that this was unrealistic and futile.

¹⁸ On this historical background, see e.g. Rainer Albertz, *Religionsgeschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit: Von den Anfängen bis zum Ende der Königszeit*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 Grundrisse zum Alten Testament. Das Alte Testament Deutsch Ergänzungsreihe 8/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 366-372; Albertz, "Zerstörung," 26f.

¹⁹ There is a tendency in some of the literature to accept the dates in Ezekiel as generally trustworthy; so, for instance, Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 12*-15*; Clements, *Ezekiel*, 1. Differently Lang, *Ezechiel*, 55; Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 216 note 70.

Dated or not, for none of the vision accounts is it possible – neither is it relevant for the present thesis – to answer the question whether there has been any "real event" on a particular day or whether the vision is pure literary fiction. Whatever triggered the author to write it, the product is in any event consciously formed *literature*.

²⁰ Refer to Section 6.2.5.

In addition, the same section suggested an early date for both the original words. This can now be detailed further.

6.2.3.1 The Date of the Original Cauldron Word (11:3-4, 5c-12)

The false sense of security reflected in the saying of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (11:3) fits best in the time before the siege of Jerusalem (588):²¹ after the first deportation in 597, the remaining residents feel obviously safe in the city. The oracle predicts an upcoming punishment for them through the “sword” (11:8ab, 10a). In this announcement of severe, violent judgement and in the shattering of an unrealistic reliance on the status of Jerusalem as the city of YHWH, the original cauldron word (11:3-4, 5c-12) is indeed comparable to the original first temple vision (8-11*). It would seem, therefore, that both texts have approximately the same age, and there is no reason to deny that they are also by the same author, Ezekiel.

6.2.3.2 The Date of the Word for the Exiles (11:14-20*)

It proved difficult²² to define the oldest version of 11:14-21. Likewise, there is no consensus about its date: for some scholars, the generally more positive message indicates a date after 587,²³ while others argue that in 11:15 Jerusalem is presupposed intact, in contrast to the otherwise equivalent verse 33:24.²⁴

Son of man, the inhabitants of these waste places in the land of Israel keep saying, “Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess.” (NRSV)

²¹ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 241f. dates the oldest part of 11:1-13 (for him: 11:1-8, 13) also before 589.

²² Refer back to 3.2.1.2.

²³ So e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 121, 124; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 143; Hals, *Ezekiel*, 47, 70f.

²⁴ So e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 252; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 96; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 204; Dieter Baltzer, “Literarkritische und literarhistorische Anmerkungen zur Heilsprophetie im Ezechiel-Buch,” in *Ezekiel and His Book: Textual and Literary Criticism and Their Interrelation*, ed. Johan Lust, BETL 74 (Leuven: Peeters, 1986), 170f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 63f; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 110.

Yet, as Eichrodt explains,²⁵ precisely the resemblance to 33:24-28 makes a post-587 date more probable. As for the contrast between “Jerusalem” and “waste places,” the latter would be inappropriate in Ezek 11, a context, in which the city is still intact. It is even possible that the wording of 11:14-20* was adapted to this context when it was combined with 11:1-13 and inserted into the first temple vision.

Another unresolved question is that of the relationship of 11:17, 19-20 and the parallel promise in 36:24-28; this depends very much on the stance one takes regarding the latter text’s authenticity.²⁶

The rivalry about land between Jerusalem inhabitants and exiles as expressed in 11:15 is a verisimilar backdrop for most of the exilic and early post-exilic period. It does not constitute an argument against an early exilic setting; such tensions would undoubtedly have been provoked as early as Gedaliah’s attempted territorial reforms, i.e. from shortly after the defeat in 587 until Gedaliah’s murder in 582.²⁷ Whether one decides for a pre-587 origin of (the oldest components of) 11:14-21 or generally for a date after 587 – in both cases, the date as well as the topic and the style allow ascribing this disputation word, at least in its earliest parts, to Ezekiel.²⁸

6.2.3.3 Date and Method of the Insertion of 11:1-21

We have argued that the core parts of both disputation words are old. Given that their combination and framing as a vision (through 11:1-2, 5ab, 13), and their

²⁵ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 143.

²⁶ On the textual-critical issues with 36:23c-38, see especially Lust, “Ezekiel 36-40,” 517-533. The problem has been addressed briefly in Chap. 4.1. A discussion of Ezek 36 in greater depth would exceed the limits of this thesis.

²⁷ Contra Hossfeld, “Tempelvision Ez 8-11/15” who, denying the possibility of Ezekielian authorship, dates the unit in the late exilic period because he assumes this rivalry would emerge only then. See also Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 21 note 73 in criticism of Hossfeld. On the historical background of Gedaliah’s reform and his death, see Mitchell, “Babylonian Exile and Restoration,” 410-415; Albertz, *Religionsgeschichte Israels*, 1 372f.

²⁸ From his detailed lexematic examination, Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 15-21 concludes, “daß der Grundbestand Ezek 11,14.15a^b*.16 weder einem außerezechielischem Tradenten- bzw. Gedankenkreis verpflichtet ist, ... noch Nachträgen innerhalb des Ezechielbuches zugeordnet werden muß. Es spricht nichts dafür, ihn Ezechiel abzusprechen” (p. 21). Differently Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 323 note 191.

insertion into the first temple vision considerably altered the structure, genre, and meaning of 11:3-12*, 14-20*, it would seem that this process occurred at a significantly later time and was not performed by the same author. As noted in the redaction history of Ezek 8-11,²⁹ especially the *Wiederaufnahme* of 10:19 in 11:22 is a sign that 11:1-21 was inserted after the cherubim redaction or, more exactly, after the wheel redaction. Furthermore, the fact that the connection from 10:19d to 11:1b is interrupted by the identity statements in 10:20-22 recommends the supposition that 11:1-22 was added before these.

The incorporating of 11:1-21 into the first temple vision demonstrates a considerable editorial resolve to create a coherent book. The redactor chose two unrelated oracles whose only link to Ezek 8-11* were the vaguely common topics *Jerusalem* and *judgement*, and arranged them roughly imitating the structure of the first temple vision. The redactional tactic applied was that of compiling crucial connection parts (11:1-2, 5ab, 13) out of pre-existing material (8:1d, 3*; 9:8; 10:19).³⁰ This redactional connection to Chapters 8-10 shows a certain affinity to the “redactional vision accounts,”³¹ which would suggest a late, i.e. post-exilic, date for the insertion of 11:1-21. Hence despite containing authentic Ezekielian material, the two subunits 11:1-13, 14-21 reached their present position in the visionary context only in much more recent times; originally they are not associated with a vision.

6.2.4 The Original Vision of the Bones (37:1-14*)

6.2.4.1 Date

It is often discussed whether 37:1-14* originally commenced with a date, which was then lost during the transmission of the text. The unusually abrupt beginning (37:1a) seems to hint at that, yet, unfortunately, none of the versions has

²⁹ Refer back to Chap. 3.2.7.

³⁰ Refer back to Chap. 3.5.2.2. In addition, 11:13a copies 37:7c.

³¹ Discussed below, Section 6.6.2.

preserved such a date. There is also no explanation as to why it would have been dropped. A solution to the textual problem is therefore unattainable.³²

However, more can be said from text-inherent indications. In particular, the quoted saying of the House of Israel (37:11) definitely points to the time after the fall of Jerusalem, since its depressed mood contrasts the illusionary optimism of the years prior to 587. On the other hand, although the saving action of YHWH seems to be expected in the near future, it is presented as something entirely beyond “reasonable” hope.³³ This suggests a date well before the Medes and Persians appear on the scene; more probably toward the beginning of the exile when the pain of the defeat is still acute.

In the present sequence of the book, the preceding date occurs in 33:21, the fifth day of the tenth month of year eleven (January 586); the subsequent date is that of the second temple vision in 40:1, the tenth day of the 25th year (April 574). It is conceivable that the twelve years in between those two dates roughly reflect the time when 37:1-14* was written.³⁴

The question of authorship is connected to the general question of whether it is deemed possible that a shift from announcement of total destruction to announcement of total renewal can occur with the same author. In other words: did the prophetic activity of Ezekiel extend beyond 587, or are all salvation oracles a priori pseudepigraphic?³⁵ Today, the majority of critics accept this shift in principle

³² See 4.2.2.1, as well as most commentaries and relevant studies, e.g. Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 506f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 886, 891; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 344f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 283.

³³ Refer back to Chaps 4.3. and 4.5.

³⁴ Similarly Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 891 (for all of 37:1-14); Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 397f; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 305 (for 37:1-11b*). Opinions of different later dates are held e.g. by Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 491-499; Klein, *Schriftauslegung*, 384-406; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 232-237.

³⁵ This was assumed in particular by Siegfried Herrmann, *Die prophetischen Heilserwartungen im Alten Testament: Ursprung und Gestaltwandel*, BWANT 85 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1965).

as authentic.³⁶ Since 37:1-14* is sufficiently congruent in style, tone and content to other Ezekielian texts, there is no reason to suppose a different author for the original version of the vision of the dry bones.³⁷

6.2.4.2 Non-Redactional Connections between 37:1-14* and 2:3-3:15*

Being a vision of the coming of the *רִיחַ יְהוָה*, it is not surprising that this vision stands outside the three *מִרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים* (1:1; 8:3 and 40:2) that deal with the coming and going of the *כְּבוֹד יְהוָה*.³⁸

Thus may be the first impression when reading all four vision accounts in Ezekiel, especially on a synchronic level. The vision of the dry bones seems oddly remote from the other visions, except perhaps for the introduction.³⁹

On the grounds of the here proposed redaction-critical results, the situation on the level of the original accounts presents itself quite differently. While it is true that 37:1-14* differs from 8-11* and 40-43* in more than one regard, the vision of the dry bones has noteworthy connections to the vision of Ezekiel's call (2:3-3:11*, 14c, 15*). This correspondence becomes only evident, however, as a result of the redaction-critical analysis because it regards the original call vision alone, not the expanded text with the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12, 14).

The commonalities between 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14* do not meet the eye at the first glance. Obviously, the subject matter of the visions is very dissimilar: a hand holding a scroll versus a valley full of bones. Each has its unique structure: chiastic in 2:3-3:15*, parallel in 37:1-14*.⁴⁰ Besides, only 37:1-14* includes an interpretative

³⁶ For more about the shift from judgement to salvation in Ezekiel, see Chap. 7 and especially Raitt, *Theology of Exile*.

³⁷ In agreement with Bertholet's famous statement, "Ihm [Ezekiel] diese Vision abzusprechen ... ist eine Entgleisung." Bertholet and Galling, *Hesekiel*, 129.

³⁸ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 200.

³⁹ The introductions of 8:1-3*; 37:1; 40:1-2a* all contain the phrase "the hand of YHWH upon me" (37:1a; 8:1d; 40:1a₂; cf. 1:3b; 3:14d, 22a) and the transport of the prophet by divine force. The introduction of 40:1-2a* is the most similar to 37:1 (see below 6.3.3).

⁴⁰ Refer back to Chaps 2.3 and 4.3.

disputation word (37:11-14*) and, as observed in the analysis, treats genre-typical features with such liberty that it is form-critically hardly recognizable as a vision account.

Nonetheless, 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14* are interconnected by a range of correspondences that simultaneously set them apart from the temple visions 8-11*; 40-43*. To begin with the most evident: they are the two shortest of the original vision accounts, with about twenty and fourteen verses respectively. Accordingly, they are also simpler, containing a less complex sight and no location changes within the body of the narrative.⁴¹ Neither 2:3-3:15* nor 37:1-14* are labelled מְרֵאוֹת אֱלֹהִים (8:3d; 11:24bc; 40:2a). The term כְּבוֹד יְהוָה (10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a; 43:4a, 5c) appears in neither of them because YHWH is not the content of these visions; God's presence is not at issue, it is simply presupposed.⁴² Hence the prophet does not *see* the presence of God. He only *hears* God's voice. As a result, 2:3-3:15*; 37:1-14* have a much higher percentage of direct speech in comparison with 8-11* and 40-43*. Whilst the two original temple visions use dialogue sparingly, 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14* consist of over fifty per cent direct speech.

Yet it is not only the quantity of speech which is similar; both in the vision of the scroll and in that of the bones the prophet is repeatedly prompted to transmit a divine word to its addressees. The formulaic sequence "You shall say to them: Thus says YHWH" occurs twice in each account (2:4cd; 3:11de; 37:4c+5a, 12bc) but never in the original temple visions.⁴³ In this sense, the prophet is more involved, as he is affirmed in his role as messenger (even if the delivery of the message is not

⁴¹ Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 193f., 233 takes the difference between 37:1-14* and the other three visions as one sign for a late, non-Ezekielian date of the vision of the bones in general.

⁴² Also other central themes of chaps 8-11* and 40-43*, such as the role of the temple and the contrast between defilement and holiness do not play any role. For instance, in 37:1-14* the priest Ezekiel wanders around among dead bones (37:2) without the least concern about their contaminating impurity.

⁴³ Both redactional visions, 3:22-27 and 44:4-6*, copy the sequence (3:27cd; 44:6ab; also 37:9de). It is widespread in non-visionary contexts; 6:3; 12:19; 13:2-3, 18; 14:4; 16:3; 17:3; 20:3, 5, 27; 21:3, 8, 14, 33; 22:3; 24:3; 25:3; 27:3; 28:12, 22; 29:3; 30:2; 34:2; 35:3; 36:1, 3, 6; 38:3, 14; 39:1.

narrated), whereas the messenger function takes a back seat in 8-11* and 40-43*.⁴⁴ In the call vision, the prophet is sent (2:3; 3:1, 4, 11) to the *House of Rebellion* (2:5c, 6g; 7d, 8c, 3:9d); the words he has to eat, and presumably then to regurgitate to them, are of “lamentation, mourning, and woe” (2:10c). In the vision of the bones, Ezekiel is asked to prophecy first to the dry bones (37:4) and then to their real-life equivalent, the *House of Israel* (37:12); the message is an extraordinary promise of restored life. The antithetical relationship is clear: the prophet first announces death to an audience that is alive, stubborn, and, so to speak, full of their own spirit. His second announcement is the exact opposite: assuring life to a dead, “de-spirited” audience.⁴⁵

The bond between 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14* is further strengthened by the observation that both vision accounts are related to another prominent form in the book of Ezekiel: the sign-acts. While in 8-11*; 40-43* a *location*, the temple, is at the heart of the narrative, in 2:3-3:15*; 37:1-14* a *symbolic object* (respectively the scroll and the bones) takes centre stage. These two symbols are materialized figurative speech (like 5:1-2),⁴⁶ though they exist only in the vision; the sign-acts usually involve real, tangible objects. The point in common is that the prophet has to *do* something with the symbolic object – something which illustrates Israel’s present or future situation. By this action Ezekiel displays in his own person the message he has to convey. Since the message is communicated by means of illustration instead of explaining it verbally, this usually appears strange and exaggerated. Now, one might say, there is a certain parity between things like eating a book scroll (3:1-3),

⁴⁴ The only other instance of active prophetic involvement within a vision account is 11:1-13 but the visionary context in that case is redactional; see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 889, and Section 6.6.3. In which sense the participation of the prophet is “much as in the Temple vision of chs. 8-11” (Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 747), remains unclear to me.

⁴⁵ In the juxtaposition of announcement of judgement – announcement of restoration, the pair of 2:3-3:15*; 37:1-14* is analogous to the pair of 8-11*; 40-43* (see below, 6.2.5). It needs to be mentioned that 37:1-14* also alludes to other texts of judgement, in particular 6:5; 24:4, *5bis*, 10, as observed e.g. by Klein, “Prophecy Continued,” 574f.

⁴⁶ This commonality of 3:1-3 (Jer 15:16); 5:1-2 (Isa 7:20); 37:1-10/11 has been noticed e.g. by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 890; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 314.

besieging a brick (4:1-3), digging through a wall at night (12:5), not mourning the death of his own wife (24:15-18), and talking to desiccated bones (37:4-6).⁴⁷ From this perspective, the only difference is that the eating of the scroll and the resurrection of the bones take place within a vision instead of in front of real public audience. This might be due to the nature of the acts – both would otherwise be difficult to perform physically – or the visionary form serves to underline certain aspects the accounts intend to convey, for example that Ezekiel is literally one with YHWH’s word, or that restoration is indeed possible.⁴⁸ Moreover, at least in the present book sequence, the call vision stands in close vicinity to a collection of sign acts (4:1-5:4), separated only by two redactional units (3:16-21, 22-27). The vision of the bones is directly followed by a symbolic action (37:15-28), and includes an explanation of the visionary symbol (37:11), something that does not elsewhere occur in the vision accounts but frequently in the sign-acts.⁴⁹

In sum, there is a subtle, yet evident, interconnection between the original accounts in 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14*.⁵⁰ Both may be defined as visionary sign-acts; at the same time there is a strong emphasis on prophetic speech and the transmission of YHWH’s word. The relation between the respective audiences and messages is marked by contrast (self-assured > mourning / dejected > life).

⁴⁷ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 28 calls the sight in 37:1-14 “a magnificent pictorial sign-action.” German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 42*. The sign-act character of both the eating of the scroll and the resurrection of the bones is recognized also by Odell, *Ezekiel*, 46, 450f.

⁴⁸ Some scholars (e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 896) interpret it as an indication that the sign is directed primarily at the prophet alone, for his private edification. The fact that the vision accounts, as *narratives*, are intrinsically directed at a public audience, speaks against this view.

⁴⁹ For example in 4:16-17; 5:5; 12:10-16; 24:20-24; noticed also by Schöpflin, “Destructive and Creative Word,” 117.

⁵⁰ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 889f., who treats 37:1-14 as a literary unity, finds yet another parallel as both the eating of the scroll (2:8-3:3) and the resurrection of the bones (37:7-10) happen in two phases. But this analogy, which is not very strong, does not exist on the basis of the redaction criticism proposed in this thesis.

6.2.5 The Original Account of the Second Temple Vision (40:1-43:10*)

6.2.5.1 Date

Like 1:1, 2 and 8:1, also 40:1a,b attributes an exact date to the vision. According to 40:1, the second temple vision took place “in the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year,⁵¹ on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down” – i.e. almost twenty years after the visionary anticipation of the disaster (Ezek 8-11). As in 1:1-2, the date is double,⁵² yet in 40:1 both dates have clear reference points (598/97 and 587/86 respectively) and the equation is not problematic.

The date situates the vision of the new temple in the middle of the exile, long before any sign of hope for an imminent return. It belongs to the original layer; however, since the number twenty-five plays a prominent role in Ezek 40-42, the dating of the vision to the beginning of the “twenty-fifth year of our exile” in 40:1 seems suspicious.⁵³ Zimmerli⁵⁴ explains the importance of the number twenty-five, here and generally in Ezek 40-42, as it denotes half a period towards the fiftieth year of liberation, or “year of jubilee” (Lev 25). If this is the case, the vision alludes to a future deliverance and return, but at the same time it would imply that the exile still was to continue for another twenty-five years.⁵⁵ Whether the numbers in 40:1 are symbolic or not – the “twenty-fifth year of our exile” (i.e. the year 574) is in any case

⁵¹ Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 33-36 demonstrates convincingly that *בְּרֵאשִׁית הַשָּׁנָה* indeed means the first month of the year (Nisan). He translates the date as 10th April 574.

⁵² This is noticed also by Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 19 note 2, though he concludes, “not much can be made of this parallel.” Indeed, as we have seen, in 1:1, 2 the double date is due to redaction, for which there is no sign in 40:1.

⁵³ In fact, Greenberg, “Program of Restoration,” 190 states that both numbers, twenty-five as “half a jubilee” and fourteen as two times seven, “beg to be interpreted symbolically.” In 1:1-2; 8:1, the numbers offer no such allusions.

⁵⁴ Zimmerli, “Planungen,” 237f; *Ezechiel*, 993. See however Vogt’s criticism that, mathematically, the beginning of the twenty-fifth year would be only the centre of a 48-year period “und hat deshalb keine Beziehung zum Jubeljahr.” Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 140f.

⁵⁵ In reality, this estimate would have been about a decade too short as the exile lasted until 539 while the supposed year of jubilee would have been the year 549/48. If Zimmerli is right in assuming an allusion to the year of jubilee, this would strongly suggest that Ezek 40:1-43:10* was written way before 549/48.

the earliest possible date for the original account of the second temple vision, since it would make little sense to date an account to the future.

The differences between the described temple structure and the historical second temple that was built in 520-515 strongly suggest that the narrative was written prior to the actual construction.⁵⁶

The remote perspective on Jerusalem (the narrator has to be translocated there by divine intervention, and the name of “the city” is never used) suggests that the author is positioned at some distance. An exilic setting⁵⁷ is also advocated by the fact that the architecture that is described corresponds more to pre-exilic standards.⁵⁸ Finally, while the promise of the divine presence “among the people of Israel forever” (43:7) and the restoration of the relationship between YHWH and Israel implies the exiles’ return to the land, this aspect is not particularly emphasized. If 40:1-43:10* was written when the end of the Babylonian empire was already predictable, one would expect more detailed, and perhaps also more realistic, statements on this aspect.⁵⁹ The original account is therefore best dated during the exile, presumably not too long after 574.

6.2.5.2 Non-Redactional Connections between 8-11* and 40:1-43:10*

The correlation between the accounts of the two temple visions is well-known and has already been mentioned occasionally in the previous chapters. To be sure, the two accounts have noticeable differences, for instance in their length and structure. Their general terminology seems unrelated; in 8-11* a vision-typical

⁵⁶ For example Terence Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah: The Redaction Criticism of the Prophetic Books*, The Biblical Seminar 20 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 96; Joyce, “Ezekiel 40-42,” 32f.

⁵⁷ Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 142-146 points out that the general concern of Ezek 40-48 (in all of its layers) with ritual and purity also suits the exilic situation as this is typical for a minority in need of defining their boundaries.

⁵⁸ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 257, 262, 269.

⁵⁹ Cyrus of Persia conquered great parts of Asia Minor in 546, and took over Babylon in 539.

vocabulary prevails (verbs ראה and אמר), together with terms denoting the offences,⁶⁰ whereas in 40-43* architectural expressions (for example אֶמְה, שְׁעַר, אֵילִם) dominate over the visionary terminology.⁶¹ Moreover, Ezek 8-11* are a rather dynamic narration of sin and punishment while especially Ezek 40-42* are very static and quiet as they describe a construction. Both vision accounts employ direct speech in order to emphasize key passages. In 9:8 it is the prophet's cry that marks the high point, while the supernatural "men" remain silent. Quite the opposite, in 40:1-42:20* the guide speaks at important points (40:4; 41:4) whereas the prophet does not utter a word.

Nonetheless, parallels between Ezek 8-11* and 40:1-43:10* are significant: above all, the two visions are centred on the topic of the temple and on the crisis of God's presence in it. Structurally, both Chapter 8* and Chapters 40-42* consist of a sequence of short visionary scenes, in which the prophet is led around the temple area, from its periphery toward its centre. Even with some differences, these scenes are composed in a similar way; for instance, they all begin with a guidance note (*Führungsvisionen*).⁶²

In terms of content, 43:2-5*, where the Glory of YHWH returns by the east gate, corresponds to 10:18-11:23* where the prophet had seen it leave years before along the same way.⁶³ While the first temple vision culminated in the departure of the Glory; the second temple vision culminates in his return to stay forever. The original first temple vision takes up phrases and catchwords from the surrounding

⁶⁰ Except for common prepositions and conjunctions, the most frequent lexeme in Ezek 8-11* is אמר with 18 occurrences, followed by יהוה (16 times); ראה occurs 13 times. The preferred general term for the offences is תועבה (nine occurrences).

⁶¹ Except for common prepositions and conjunctions, the three most frequent lexemes in Ezek 40:1-43:10* are אֶמְה (46 occurrences), שְׁעַר (38 occurrences), and אֵילִם (35 occurrences).

⁶² Refer back to Chaps 3.3 and 5.4. Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 57f.

⁶³ "The vision of chaps. 8-11 in which temple and city are destroyed in reprisal for cultic aberrations finds here a positive counterpart. Moreover, the motif of the departing glory of God that not only pervades chaps. 8-11 but spills into chap. 1 is brought to a happy conclusion in the return of the divine presence." Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 213.

chapters on the theme of judgement; likewise, 40:1-43:10* presents itself as the fulfilment of the restoration promises uttered in 37:21-28.⁶⁴

Further similarities are found mainly in the introduction and towards the end of the accounts. The introduction in 40:1-4* shares some characteristic elements with 8:1-3*; 11:23-25 and 37:1a, which are, in Ezekiel, exclusive to the vision accounts.⁶⁵ One typical component is the phrase *הִיטָה עָלַי יְדִי־הוּוֹה* (40:1a₂; cf. 8:1d).⁶⁶ As in the first temple vision, the prophet is brought to “the city” by divine power: ... *וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי וַיְשִׁמָּה* (40:1c; cf. 8:3cd; 11:24ab).⁶⁷ Significantly, both temple visions are defined as “divine visions” (*מִרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים*) (40:2a; 8:3d; 11:24bc; cf. 1:1d), while neither 2:3:3-15* nor 37:1-14* bear this title.

Moreover, only 8-11*; 40:1-43:10* have auxiliary characters in the form of nameless men. Despite the difference of their tasks, the man looking “like bronze” is introduced in 40:3 in a way that recalls the first appearance of the six men in 9:2: both verses begin with *וַהֲגִיחַ*; in both the key terms *נְחֹשֶׁת* (bronze: 9:2g; 40:3c), *בְּיָדוֹ* (in his hand: 9:2c; 40:3d), *שַׁעַר* (gate: 9:2a; 40:3e), and *עָמַד* (to stand: 9:2g; 40:3e) recur.⁶⁸

In both 8-11* and 40:1-43:10*, there is a strong emphasis on the prophet’s task of observation (*רָאָה* 8:6bg, 9c, 12b, 13c, 15bd, 17b; 40:4b-f) in order to be able to function as a witness (11:25; 40:4g₁-g₂; 43:10a). He is passive and not asked to perform any action of another kind (different from 2:8-3:3; 37:4-7*).

⁶⁴ Refer back to Chaps 3.2.6 and 5.4.4.2.

⁶⁵ The similarity extends to 1:1-3*; 3:12-15*.

⁶⁶ 37:1a; also 1:3b; 3:14d, 22a. The phrasing *הִיטָה עָלַי יְדִי־הוּוֹה* is exactly the same only in 37:1a; 40:1a₂.

⁶⁷ 37:1bc; also 3:12a, 14ab and 11:1ab. However, there is no reference in 40:1-3* to the situation of the prophet immediately prior to the vision (as in 8:1). Different from chaps 8-11, and as in 37:1, the agent of the prophet’s transportation in 40:1 is not the spirit (*רוּחַ*) but YHWH (masculine verb forms); although in 37:1 the movement happens *בְּרוּחַ יְהוָה*. However, what seems the most salient correlation between 40:1-3* and 37:1, the use of the verb *hiph.* in the identical form *וַיְנִיחַנִּי* (37:1c; 40:2b), is the work of a redactor and not original to the second temple vision.

⁶⁸ Some of these terms are used quite differently in the two verses (e.g. in 9:2 the six men stand next to the bronze altar; in 40:3 the guide looks like bronze); they would not be considered references on their own. However, the amount of shared words in 9:2 and 40:3 is as such conspicuous. On the intermediary figures, see Chap. 9.1.

In contrast to the *inclusio* that frames 1:1-3:15; 8-11, the second temple vision has only an introduction but no conclusion. Instead, the finale in 43:1-10* contains various elements that recall 8-11*. The phrase וַתֵּשְׂאֵנִי רוּחַ (43:5a; cf. 8:3c; 11:24a)⁶⁹ is in the first temple vision a feature of the abovementioned frame, whereas for example the remark that the Glory was “filling the temple” (מָלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה הַבַּיִת) (43:5c; cf. 10:4bc), the mentioning of Israel’s תּוֹעֲבוֹת (43:8c; 8:6g, 9c, 13c, 15d, 17c; 9:4c), the direction “east” in connection with the Glory of YHWH (42:2; cf. 11:23), and the verb רָחַק (43:9a; 8:6e)⁷⁰ evoke Ezek 8-11* in general.

6.2.5.3 The Second Temple Vision as a Counterpart to the First

Hence Ezek 40:1-43:10* features clear references to Ezek 8-11*: its similar beginning, its structure in visionary scenes, the topic of the temple, and especially the return of the Glory of YHWH. In addition, the assumed dates of the two temple visions (before 587 / at least 574) make it almost certain that the second temple vision was written with knowledge of the first and presupposes it, being a somewhat more encouraging response to the hopeless situation portrayed in Ezek 8-11*.

The sequence, in the second temple vision, of: empty, but sacred, temple (40:5-42:20*) – entrance of the Glory (43:2-5) – no more idolatry (43:7, 9-10) inverts the order, in 8-11*, of: Israel’s idolatry (8:5-18) – defiled temple (9:5-7*) – exit of the Glory (10:4-11:23*). In both visions, the sequence implies a causal or conditional relationship. Because of Israel’s sins the temple was defiled and YHWH no longer present in it. Analogously, because there is a new and sacred temple, YHWH’s presence returns, and there will be no more idolatry. While the first tragic chain of events is triggered by human deeds, the second redeeming process begins with the static existence of a building. This building however represents in its symmetric and

⁶⁹ Similar also 3:12a, 14a; 11:1a.

⁷⁰ Additionally, Joyce, “Temple and Worship,” 155 sees a certain parallel, with regard to cult statues, between 8:3-6 and 43:7-9.

concentric structure the restored order of the relationship between heavenly and earthly realms, in opposition to the disorder portrayed in Ezek 8. Hence already in its oldest stage, the second temple vision (40:1-43:10*) has the character of a positive counterpart to the first temple vision (8-11*). In this view, the original version of Chapters 40-43* does not imply an eschatological meaning but expects its realization in a not too distant future.⁷¹

The time lag from Ezek 8-11* to 40:1-43:10* of more than a decade, along with the altered historical circumstances (i.e. before and after the actual destruction of the temple), are a sufficient explanation for the disparities between the two accounts. There is no need to suspect a different author, or to separate the original stratum of Ezek 40-43* in principle from Ezek 1-39.⁷²

6.2.6 Summary

This section has shown that all six text units in question (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 11:3-12*; 11:14-20*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*) can plausibly be attributed to the sixth-century prophet “Ezekiel”; i.e. they are part of the oldest collection of the writings that are compiled in the book bearing this name. The two disputation words in Ezek 11 are, at this stage, not associated to any vision at all. The four original vision accounts are arranged in a precise pattern. The more easily discernible connection is that between the two “divine visions” 8-11*; 40:1-43:10*,⁷³ yet the two “symbol-oracle” visions 2:3-3:15*; 37:1-14* are also related.⁷⁴ On the other hand, in terms of their message of either judgement or restoration, 2:3-3:15* corresponds to 8-11*, and 37:1-14* to 40:1-43:10*. The constellation can be schematically depicted as follows:

⁷¹ Konkel, “Zweite Tempelvision,” 170-175 argues that the interpretation of Ezek 40-48 as eschatological was enforced only through the insertion of the Gog chapters (Ezek 38-39) in post-exilic times. He sees the reason for this in the discrepancy between the temple prophecy and the post-exilic reality.

⁷² Especially earlier scholars hesitated to attribute any part of chaps 40-48 to Ezekiel; e.g. Hölscher, *Hesekiel, der Dichter*, 190; Hertrich, *Ezechielp Probleme*, 119-121.

⁷³ Refer to 6.2.5.2.

⁷⁴ Refer to 6.2.4.2.

2:3-3:15*	symbol / oracle	}	judgement)
8-11*	temple / Glory of YHWH		judgement	
37:1-14*	symbol / oracle		restoration)
40:1-43:10*	temple / Glory of YHWH		restoration	

Table 21 – Arrangement of the Original Vision Accounts

At the same time, from the first temple vision onwards, the vision accounts show marked similarities in their beginning. Since the original beginning of the call vision is lost, it is impossible to know whether or not it was also of the same style. Especially the phrase “the hand of YHWH upon me” and supernatural transfer to and/or from the place of the vision are common denominators of three of the four original vision accounts (8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*), functioning as additional markers of the visionary genre in Ezekiel.

6.3 *The Vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*)*

We now move from the original basic texts to the redactional layers. In the course of redaction criticism, it became clear that the book of Ezekiel has seen a substantial redactional effort, directed to multiply connections especially between the vision accounts, in order to increase the coherence of the book.

Although in itself it has no particular unifying quality, many of these harmonizing efforts draw in some way on the expansion of the call narrative, the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1, 3b-13*, 22-28; 2:1-2; 3:12, 14abd). Thus it seems wise to begin with this visionary text since the findings about its date, authorship, and relation to the original writings will influence the results regarding the redactions that depend on it. In particular the question of its date, linked to the mysterious “thirtieth year” (1:1a), causes considerable problems. The proposed solution to this puzzle will shed some new light on the interpretation and intention of the vision of the Glory and on its function within the book in general.

6.3.1 Date

One result of redaction criticism was it to assign the date in 1:1 to the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1, 3b-28*; 2:1-2; 3:12-14*).⁷⁵ This date has long posed particular difficulties for scholars. The fourteen precise dates in the book of Ezekiel⁷⁶ range from the fifth to the thirtieth year; in three instances (1:2; 33:21; 40:1), the first deportation to Babylonia is given as the reference point. The two extremes of the sequence of dates, the thirtieth and the fifth year, are found in 1:1 and 1:2 side by side. Since the time of the Rabbis and the Early Church, much has been written about how to interpret the relationship between these two verses. Commonly, it is the date in 1:1 that is perceived as disturbing the overall chronology. Generations of scholars have suggested every kind of emendation and alternative reference points in order to harmonize the two dates, but none has reached a clear consensus.⁷⁷ The Targum Jonathan for example interprets the *thirtieth year* from the finding of the “Book of the Law” under King Josiah in 622, thereby trying to make it coincide with the fifth year of King Jehoiachin.⁷⁸ Since Origen, another, very popular, solution is to see in the *thirtieth year* a reference to the prophet’s age.⁷⁹

Given these difficulties it may be prudent to consider the text itself. The comparison of 1:1a with the dates in other chapters in Ezekiel reveals no hint that a different reference point is understood, because the wording of 1:1a corresponds exactly to that of the other dates containing a year greater than ten:⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Refer back to Chap. 2.2.2.4.

⁷⁶ Ezek 1:1; 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1.

⁷⁷ For surveys of opinions see for example Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 42f; York, “Ezekiel I,” 83-91; Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 45-50; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 80-82; and, more recently but very synthetic, Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 65f.

⁷⁸ Quoted in: Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 3. A modern scholar in favour of this proposition is e.g. Marco Nobile, “‘Nell’anno trentesimo...’ (Ez 1,1),” *Anton* 59 (1984), 33-42.

⁷⁹ Karl Budde, “Zum Eingang des Buches Ezechiel,” *JBL* 50 (1931): 20-41; and Julius A. Bewer, “The Text of Ezek 1:1-3,” *AJSL* 50, no. 2 (1934): 96-101. By adopting this thesis, Bewer tries to harmonize not only the dates but virtually every tension within the first three verses. More recently, e.g. Vogt, *Untersuchungen*, 3; James E. Miller, “The Thirtieth Year of Ezekiel 1:1,” *RB* 99 (1992): 499-503; Odell, “You Are What You Eat,” 238f; Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 9, 18f.

⁸⁰ Ezek 26:1; 29:17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21; 40:1; with Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 49f.

אָ + *number* אָנפֿ / אָ + *article* + *number of month* / אָ + *number of day* “of the month”
(in the x^{th} year, in the y^{th} [month], on the z^{th} [day] of the month).

The interpretation closest to the text is therefore that the *thirtieth year* relates to the deportation of King Jehoiachin in 598/97; it then denotes the year 569.⁸¹

In fact, if 1:2 is a gloss to 1:1 – as it has been defined in the redaction-critical analysis of 1:1-3:15 – it is more than likely that the two dates were originally not coinciding but that the glossator tried to adapt the awkward *thirtieth year* to the book’s internal chronology. That the redactor of 1:2 plainly wanted the reader to equal the two dates says nothing about the factual truth of this view. The very difficulties this late date in the first verse of the book creates give evidence for its originality, because it is hardly explicable why an editor or scribe would have changed a more “logical” date into this one.⁸²

Yet the question remains: why place such a *late* date at the *beginning* of the book? Again, this is only reasonable if the date is authentic. Anthony York and Bernhard Lang affirm, each in their own way, that the two dates in 1:1-2 originally introduced two distinct vision accounts, which were combined much later by redaction.⁸³ Out of chronological concerns, York proposes that the original place of 1:1 was before Chapter 43; this however obliges him to assume serious transpositions in the composition of the book, which makes his theory very hypothetical and not very convincing. Lang remains closer to the text when he suggests that a redactor merged Ezekiel’s last vision (which Lang defines as 1:1, 3b-

⁸¹ Among the scholars who count the thirty years, like all other dates in the book, from Jehoiachin’s exile are Berry, “Title,” 54-57; Carl G. Howie, “The Date and Composition of Ezekiel” (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1950; York, “Ezekiel I,” 82-98; Lang, “Erste und letzte Vision,” 225-230; Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 11, 21; Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*. The rejection by Konkel, “Prophet ohne Eigenschaften,” 223 note 27 seems over-hasty.

⁸² Contra e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 42f; Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 51f.; Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 59-62.

⁸³ York, “Ezekiel I,” 82-98 (adopted by Fuhs, *Ezechiel*, 21); and Lang, “Erste und letzte Vision,” 225-230.

2:2; 3:12-14) with the account of his call. According to Lang, this redactor simply conserved the date. Chronology then has played a subordinate role in the aesthetics of the redaction (compare Ezek 29:17 where, too, the date is out of sequence due to redaction).

Hence, once concerns for chronological order are set aside, the *thirtieth year* indicates the date of the vision of the Glory (1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*) in the same way as 8:1 and 40:1 do of the two temple visions; i.e. the vision of the Glory of YHWH was written in, or later than, 569. In the light of the result of redaction criticism that 1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14* is a secondary expansion to the actual call narrative, this seems at least not impossible. The custom of dating major passages of text is explicable as a reminiscence to Ezekiel's own style. The year 569, only five years later than the date given for the original second temple vision in 40:1, places the vision of the Glory of YHWH into a mid-exilic setting. This is supported by its use, more extensively than anywhere else in the book, of Mesopotamian imagery.

6.3.2 Authorship

Whether the vision of Glory was written by the late Ezekiel himself or by his "school" is, as usual, hard to tell. While in terms of chronology it could be authored by Ezekiel, a number of inconsistencies rather imply a different author, though very close to the prophet. These discrepancies involve aspects of style and content.

The style is more apocalyptic than in all other visions: in Ezek 8-11*; 37:1-14; 40-43*, God shows Ezekiel something he wants him to witness and to proclaim to Israel. Though the prophet does see, in both original temple visions, the Glory of YHWH, he does not describe it other than by standard theophanic images like "cloud" and "brightness" (10:4; 43:2, 5). By contrast, the focus of 1:4-2:2* is on the appearance of the divine as such; the description of the sight is not directly at the

service of Ezekiel's call to prophecy, neither is it an integral part of the message conveyed. Instead, it betrays a greater interest in marginal details, such as what the Glory looks like and how it moves.

Regarding the content, there is a certain ambiguity between the visionary return of YHWH to his new sanctuary (43:1-10*) and his appearance in exile. While in 8:1-3*; 40:1-4* the prophet is transported from his remote domicile to the city where YHWH resides, in Ezek 1 the exact opposite occurs.⁸⁴ By itself, this does not need to be a tension because gods were generally imagined present both in the sanctuary and in heaven, and an appearance of the deity far from the temple is not impossible. However, in the light of the emphasized proclamation of the new sanctuary as “the place of my throne... where I will reside” (43:7bc), the pompous manifestation of the throne at some Babylonian river is odd, and it is most easily explained if a different author is assumed.

6.3.3 The Creation of a New Cycle of Visions

It is conventional in Ezekiel scholarship to note that a certain terminology links especially the introductions of the great visionary compositions Ezek 1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48; and, to a certain degree, 37:1-14.⁸⁵ In the course of redaction, these lexematic and phrasal links increase markedly; the vision of the Glory of YHWH plays a key part in this process. It can be supposed that at the time when the vision of the Glory was added, a compilation of Ezekiel's writings already existed, including, besides the call narrative, the original versions of the first and second temple vision (8-11*; 40:1-43:10*) and of the vision of the bones (37:1-14*). We have also seen that in Ezek 8-11* the transport to and from Jerusalem and references to the exilic audience

⁸⁴ Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 99.

⁸⁵ Refer to Section 6.2.5.2. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 40*-42* speaks of a “ganz stereotypen Vokabular” (p. 40*). See also van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 115-121. He proposes a pattern of the relationship between the three largest vision accounts on the level of the finalized book (see figure p. 118).

of the prophet originally form a narrative frame around the vision account;⁸⁶ the second temple vision, as well as 37:1-14, has a comparable introduction but no such ending. For reasons we will concentrate upon shortly, the redactor who composed 1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14* felt the necessity to associate it closely with the existing Ezekielian vision accounts, by imitating their introductions and their vocabulary.

As a result, besides the regular genre-typical features of visionary part and speech part,⁸⁷ in all greater vision accounts in Ezekiel, the reference to “YHWH’s hand upon me” can be found (היה עָלַי יְדֵי־יהוה) 1:3; 3:14; 3:22; 8:1; 37:1; 40:1),⁸⁸ as well as a change of location by “spirit/wind” (נִשְׂאָה + רוּחַ) 3:12, 14; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 43:5; only 37:1 has רִיזְצֹאנִי בְרוּחַ יְהוָה).

In addition, the vision of the Glory of YHWH has a number of phrases in common with the two temple visions. Significantly, only these three vision accounts are titled “divine visions” (מְרִאוֹת אֱלֹהִים) 1:1d; 8:3d; 11:24bc; 40:2a). In all three, the concept of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה is paramount.⁸⁹

However, it seems that in 1:28c; 3:12c this term is inspired by Ezek 10-11*; 43*, in the sense that the vision of the Glory uses the expression *because* it occurs in the temple visions. There are two indications for this. Firstly, the meaning diverges: in 1:28c (and 3:12c) כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה seems to refer to the entire glorious sight, including throne, dome and creatures. In the earliest stratum of Ezek 10 and in 43:2, 4-10, the Glory is not further described but simply denotes the visible, luminous phenomenon of the presence of YHWH in his sanctuary, so that Ezekiel can watch him leave and arrive, respectively. Secondly, whereas the vision at the riverside would be perfectly

⁸⁶ Refer to Chap. 3.2.6.

⁸⁷ Refer to Chap. 1.3.

⁸⁸ In 8:1, the verb is נִפַּל instead of היה. The phrase recurs also in Ezek 33:22. As van Dyke Parunak, “Literary Architecture,” 61 observes, this expression is connected to a date only in 1:3; 8:1; 40:1, i.e. at the beginning of the three major vision accounts. See also Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 68-70.

⁸⁹ כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה: 1:28; 3:12, [23]; 10:4, 18; 11:23; 43:4, 5; [44:4]; כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 8:4; 9:3; 10:19; 11:22; 43:2. On the different denotations, see Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 107.

intelligible as a theophany even without the colophon 1:28c, in Ezek 10-11*; 43* the term *כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה* is an essential part of the narratives even at their earliest stage.⁹⁰

The vision of the Glory further refers to 43:1-10* alone by reiterating the comparison *כְּקוֹל מַיִם רַבִּים* (like the sound of mighty waters: 1:24a; 43:2b; cf. the later verse 10:5) and the unusual combination of *וָאֶשְׁמַע* (I heard) with a *hithpa'el* participle of *דָּבַר* (speaking: 2:2d; 43:6a; cf. 1:28f [*pi.*]).

On the other hand, in both 1:1-2:2* and 8-11*, the number *four* plays a vital part (1:5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18; four abominations in Ezek 8, four times the question “Have you seen...?”),⁹¹ whereas in 40-43* the numbers 25 and 100 are more prominent. The specific bond between 1:1-2:2* and 8-11* through the recurrence of composite creatures is owing to the cherubim redaction and will be discussed later.

There is one link to the vision of the dry bones, namely the causal combination of the *רוּחַ* coming (בּוֹא 2:2a; 37:10c; cf. 3:24a) with the phrase *עָמַד עַל־רַגְלָי* (2:1b, 2c; 37:10e; cf. 3:24b): a getting up in the sense of “regaining of wakeful vitality.”⁹²

It would seem that the author-redactor of 1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14* had two main reasons for creating these connections: a) to insert the vision of the Glory neatly into the wider context, and b) to reorganize the cycle of visions that encompasses the entire book, leading from Ezekiel’s call as a prophet of doom to his final view of restoration. In placing the title *כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה* at the climax of Chapter 1, the redactor identifies the apparition at a Babylonian riverside with the very presence of YHWH in the temple; thereby he bestows it with greater dignity. Conversely, in both temple visions the reader is supposed to recall the unlimited freedom and overwhelming

⁹⁰ It is worth mentioning here that the term *כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה* occurs as often as four times in Ezek 10-11* (10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a) yet only once in 1:28c (+ in 3:12c).

⁹¹ The cherubim redaction and the wheel redaction increase this: 10:9b, 10a, 11a, 14[MT], 21ab; cf. the “four winds” in the secondary verse 37:9f.

⁹² Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 262. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 896. The connection is observed also by Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 303; and Woodhouse, “Spirit,” 12f.

power implied in the concept of the Glory of YHWH.⁹³ Instead of two pairs of vision accounts, as before, now there are three interconnected vision accounts plus 37:1-14*, which stands somewhat apart.⁹⁴

6.3.4 The Vision of the Glory as “Overture”

6.3.4.1 A Legitimation Crisis

In the first temple vision, Ezekiel announced the defilement of the sanctuary and the destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants; this happened just a short time later. The second temple vision, on the contrary, described a new temple, promising the renewed presence of YHWH in the midst of his people. Ezekiel’s contemporaries – if they believed him at all – were likely to expect this vision to come true equally soon. However, the exile did not end as promptly. Years passed without a sign of the fulfilment either of 40:1-43:10*, or 37:1-14*, or any of the oracles of deliverance; this delay presumably led to a reliability crisis for the salvation promises in the Ezekiel tradition.

6.3.4.2 The Response: Confirming the Power of YHWH

Now, if the *thirtieth year* in 1:1 (like the other dates in the book) refers to the first deportation, the vision of the Glory is dated just five years later than the second temple vision,⁹⁵ therefore precisely in that critical period of time.

In this context, adding the awe-inspiring “narrative firework” of 1:1-2:2* at the beginning of the collection of Ezekiel’s writings could only have a reaffirming effect

⁹³ Tuell, “Temple Vision,” 100 sums up the effect of the interconnection, stating “that [the three visions] are meant to be seen together, interpreted in the light of each other. Indeed, they are three separate experiences of one reality: the reality of the presence and glory of God.”

⁹⁴ The isolation of 37:1-14 will increase over time. As noted e.g. by Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, “Das Buch Ezechiel,” in *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, ed. Christian Frevel and Erich Zenger, KSbT 1,1 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2012), 596, it is the only vision account that does not attract any explicit back-references.

⁹⁵ Refer back to Section 6.3.1.

on their authority. Obviously the legitimation provided by the older call narrative (2:3-3:15*) was not any more sufficient in the face of contemporary criticism and doubts. Besides authorizing Ezekiel as a true prophet, the vision of the Glory puts great emphasis on portraying YHWH as the true lord of the cosmos. Validating Ezekiel's words as God's words is apparently no longer enough; even YHWH himself needs to be reaffirmed in his power and majesty⁹⁶ – because only then will his words be trusted!

The author of the vision of the Glory of YHWH understood that adding a new beginning to a text alters its perception and interpretation, as the first paragraphs of a narrative determine to a great extent the reader's perspective on it. Hence if his intention was to insist on the power of YHWH against contemporary doubts, the redactor chose the most effective position for his expansion.

By what means does 1:1-2:2* reaffirm that YHWH is the lord of the cosmos? This is achieved in two ways, which are both linked to the text's imagery. Firstly, through the symbolism of the living beings. The four composite beings beneath the throne are surely the most striking image in the vision of the Glory of YHWH. As we have seen,⁹⁷ they have a double function as sky bearers: defending the Holy from the profane and symbols of unrestricted authority over the earth; and throne bearers: symbols of unrestricted mobility. Depicting YHWH in this way was a statement for YHWH's effectiveness, in Babylonia as much as anywhere else.

Secondly, YHWH's rulership is affirmed through more or less evident hints at YHWH's power in judgement, given through storm theophanic images as well as through allusions to judgement texts in other chapters. We shall look at this in more detail.

⁹⁶ "The Judahite exiles reflected poorly upon the reputation and power of Yhwh ... Ezekiel proclaimed that the earthly realities of his time did not accurately mirror the configuration of power in the heavenly realm, where Yhwh was king." Launderville, "Throne-Chariot Vision," 362.

⁹⁷ Refer back to Section 2.4.2.3.

6.3.4.3 Allusions to Judgement

Besides the symbolism of the living beings, the vision in 1:4-28c has traits of a storm theophany. The structurally important verses 1:4, 13 and the last verses from 1:24 onward contain typical elements, such as cloud, wind, thunder, fire and lightning.⁹⁸ These evoke ambiguous associations: on the one hand, the victory over enemies, as for instance in Ps 18, hence a positive, even triumphant connotation. On the other hand, theophany can indicate impending judgement (Isa 6), and therefore have a negative, perilous undertone.⁹⁹ In the terminology of Otto, a theophany conveys the *mysterium tremendum*, provoking a spontaneous reaction of fear and awe. In any case it portrays an active God entering into, and changing, history.

The storm theophanic elements fire, wind, lightning and cloud will also reappear in the context of a powerful manifestation of God in judgement at later points of the book. For example, *fire* (אֵשׁ 1:4c, 13cd, 2b) is mentioned frequently either literally as means of judgement or figurative as “the fire of my wrath.”¹⁰⁰ The *storm wind* (רוּחַ סְעָרָה 1:4b) is in 13:11-14 part of the divine punishment of the false prophets.¹⁰¹ *Lightning* (בָּרָק 1:13) is, in 21:15, 20, 33, an image for the sword that is “polished for slaughter.” Even the *cloud* (עָנָן 1:4b, 28b) – enveloped in darkness instead of brightness! – is associated with judgement in the context of the words against Egypt (30:3, 18; 32:7).¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Compare to Ps 18:8-16 // 2 Sam 22:8-16; Ps 77:17-19; 97:2-4; 104:1-4; 148:8; Ex 19. For more lexical links between Ps 18 and Ezek 1, see Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 103f., especially note 95.

⁹⁹ Allen, “Structure and Intention,” 153f. sees the storm-theophany aspect prevailing in “prophetic use.” The examples he lists are however mostly later than Ezek 1 (except perhaps for Am 1:2, which contains no comparable element). By contrast, Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 142f., argues that fire and cloud allude to God’s presence, guiding Israel through the wilderness in the older exodus tradition, while brightness is a solar metaphor that in P^G is connected to the Glory of YHWH. The use of these terms, in Ezekiel, in contexts of judgement would seem to contradict her.

¹⁰⁰ Ezek 15:4-7; 16:41; 19:12, 14; 21:3, 36-37; 22:19-22, 31; 28:18; 30:8, 14, 16; 36:5; 38:19, 22; 39:6. On this metaphor in the book of Ezekiel see also Karin Schöpflin, “The Composition of Metaphorical Oracles within the Book of Ezekiel,” *VT* 55 (2005): 101-109.

¹⁰¹ Note also the recurrent phrase “scatter to the wind” (זָרָה לְרוּחַ 5:2, 10, 12; 12:14). See Woodhouse, “Spirit,” 7.

¹⁰² This image serves also as a dark background for the oracle of salvation in Ezek 34:12.

In sum, the theophanic elements from Ezek 1 are all associated with aspects of judgement. As much as the theophany of 1:4-28 is intent on making a point of the unlimited power and majesty of YHWH, it also connects this supremacy to judgement. This already contains an implicit answer to the great question the exilic readers would have had in their minds: “Why did YHWH not prevent the catastrophe?” Far from lacking power, YHWH used it to punish his people.

Further lexematic connections confirm this impression. Firstly, the reader will again encounter the term *הַיָּהוּה* in a different environment: as used for the wild beasts called by YHWH to take part in the judgement.¹⁰³ To be sure, those animals are distinguished from the supernatural creatures of 1:5-26 by the exclusive use of the singular *הַיָּהוּה*, whereas throughout the vision (except thrice in 1:20-22) the plural form *תַּיִתִּי* is employed. According to Zimmerli “darf [this meaning of ‘wild beast’] auf jeden Fall für Ezek 1-3 nicht herangezogen werden.”¹⁰⁴ However, even if the association of heavenly throne bearers with man-devouring beasts is only remote, it is quite outrageous.

Secondly, the expression “from the midst of” (*מִתּוֹכָם*; 1:4e *bis*, 5a [13a]) in connection to fire reappears in 28:16-18 against Tyre, where interestingly also a cherub plays a part (the living creatures are identified with cherubim in Ezek 10).

Lastly, while fire as such is a widely-used element of theophany, *coals of fire* (*שֹׂאֵי לֶהָאֵשׁ*) are mentioned only in 1:13a and 10:2d.¹⁰⁵ In 1:13, apart from the general term *שֹׂאֵי* (twice), three different “forms” of fire appear between the living beings:

¹⁰³ Wild beasts as means of judgement in 5:17; 14:15, 21; specifically as man-devouring beasts in 29:5; 32:4; 33:27; 39:4, 17-20; reversed into an oracle of deliverance in 34:5, 8, 25, 28.

¹⁰⁴ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 52 (in Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1 120 this is somewhat attenuated: “... in any case cannot be adduced for Ezek 1-3”). On the contrary, Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 134 suggests precisely the translation *beasts* instead of *living beings*.

¹⁰⁵ The term occurs only six times in the OT: apart from Ezek 1:13; 10:2, in the cultic orders regarding the Day of Atonement Lev 16:12 (where the coals are situated on the altar “before YHWH”), and in a theophanic context in Ps 18:13, 14; 2 Sam 22:13 (in connection with brightness, clouds, and lightning).

coals (גַּתְּלִי־אֵשׁ), torches (לְפָדִים), and lightning (בְּרָק). In 10:2, the burning coals are the fire that the man dressed in linen has to take from between the cherubim to scatter over the city; hence the coals appear in a context of judgement. The common position in 1:13; 10:2 “between” the respective mixed creatures suggests an influence of some kind; contrary to the general tendency in Chapters 1 and 10, in this case 10:2 might have inspired 1:13.¹⁰⁶

6.3.5 Summary

It appears that the majority of motives that can be followed up from Ezek 1 throughout the rest of the book are of a negative nature, i.e. they refer predominantly to judgement and doom. How does the resulting perilous keynote fit with the presumed function of defending Ezekiel’s oracles of *deliverance*? The foremost impression of the vision of the Glory is the presentation of YHWH as the Lord of the cosmos, not limited by any boundary whatsoever. In this absolutely theocentric perspective ultimately lie the only hope and the only reason for the shift towards deliverance in the second half of the book. Whilst the vision of the Glory is on the one hand a strong reminder of the judgement, on the other hand it contains the very basis for restoration and enhances the authority of all subsequent writings. This is true especially when considering that at the time of the insertion of 1:1-2:2* the judgement had already taken place. If Ezekiel had been correct in announcing the judgement – so the proposed consideration – it is to be interpreted as the work of YHWH. As a consequence, the prophet’s predictions are also trustworthy with regard to the restoration promises. The date given in 1:1a (“in the thirtieth year”) appears therefore quite plausible; in fact, seeing the vision of the Glory as an exilic product

¹⁰⁶ However, since both in 1:13 and in 10:2 the location “between...” could be secondary, the direction of the influence is not entirely clear. On the relationship of Ezek 1 and 10 in general, see below.

of the time immediately after the “authentic Ezekielian” writings has proven illuminative for its interpretation.

From the same perspective, the frame around 1:1-3:15 in imitation of 8-11* and the other allusions to both 8-11* and 40:1-43:10* can be regarded as the endeavour of creating a new cycle of visions that leads more clearly from doom to salvation. In this view, the vision of the Glory can be seen as an *overture* to the whole book of Ezekiel.¹⁰⁷ Just as an opera begins with a piece containing those major musical themes that will be repeated and disclosed throughout the work, the vision of the Glory of YHWH presents the theme of YHWH as autonomous and almighty, the fundamental keynote to the book.

The use of strong imagery ensured that the readers would remember this keynote (and, given their Babylonian location, they would understand it). It obviously made such an impression that many generations of later redactors and scribes felt inspired to amplify and edit the first chapter of Ezekiel, creating the complex textual situation with which we are faced today.

6.4 The Redactions Depending on the Vision of the Glory of YHWH

At this point we can pass on to two closely related questions: the relationship of the living beings (חַיִּים) in Ezek 1 with the living cherubim inserted through redaction mainly in 10:1-22, and the addition of wheels in both Ezek 1 and 10.

6.4.1 The Cherubim Redaction 10:1, 3, 5, 18b, 19abce, 21, 22c and 8:2-3b

Firstly, we will consider the correlation of the vision of the Glory of YHWH (mainly focussing on 1:4-13, 22-28) and cherubim redaction (10:1, 3, 5, 18b, 19abce,

¹⁰⁷ Also Odell, “Ezekiel Saw,” 163 interprets Ezek 1 as “the initial programmatic statement” of the book, but in the sense of “Yahweh’s campaign to bring the rebellious House of Israel once again under his rule.” I am not convinced by her explanation of the vision as a glimpse in the heavenly throne room, at a portrait of YHWH’s glory (pp. 174-176).

21, 22c and 8:2-3b). As has previously been noticed, the descriptions of the respective composite creatures in both vision accounts resemble each other so closely that literary dependence can be assumed. It seems helpful, as a first step, to compare the two descriptions¹⁰⁸ so as to determine whether or not the cherubim redaction and the vision of the Glory have different authors. The direction of the two chapters' dependence, and thus their relative chronology, will be discussed subsequently.

6.4.1.1 Ezek 1 and 10 Compared: The Question of Authorship

On the whole, the vision reported in Ezek 1, including the living beings, is richer in details; whereas the cherubim in Ezek 10 are incorporated in the account of YHWH leaving his temple, which is why there are references to the temple building and area.¹⁰⁹

Aside from the description of the living beings, “plusses” in Ezek 1 can be found, for example, in the description of the wings' noise, which is, by comparison, much shorter in 10:5 than in 1:24.¹¹⁰ The dome (1:22-26) is mentioned in 10:1, yet devoid of its similarity to ice. The humanlike figure, half like fire, half like *הַשֵּׁמֶל* (1:26-27), appears in 8:2-3 isolated from the throne and the creatures; in 10:1 the throne seems to be empty. In Ezek 10, the Glory is never described as anthropomorphic. Of the light effects in 1:4-28*, the lightning (1:13) and the rainbow-like nimbus around the apparition (1:28) are not mentioned in Ezek 8-11.¹¹¹

Grammatically, the language of Ezek 1 is more problematic, as masculine suffixes and verbal forms frequently (but not constantly) refer to the feminine *הַיִּוֵּת* (and feminine suffixes to the masculine wheels), whereas in Chapter 10 all forms are

¹⁰⁸ For a (German only) synopsis of the final text of Ezek 1 and 10 and a list of their differences, see Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 126-140. For a typologically sorted list of differences, see Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 316f.

¹⁰⁹ These references recur frequently in both original and redactional verses (9:3; 10:2-5, 18-19; 11:23).

¹¹⁰ However, most of the comparisons in 1:24 are lacking in LXX and could therefore be glosses.

¹¹¹ Could the reason be that the associations the rainbow conveys are too positive?

regularly masculine. Also the usage of comparison words such as דְּמוּת and כְּמַרְאֵה is less manifest there.¹¹²

Finally, the comparison of the description of the composite creatures in 1:5-26* and those in Chapter 10 betrays a precise rationale in the omission of certain features in Chapter 10. The way the living beings (חַיּוֹת) are first introduced in 1:5, “they had human form,” is not taken up in the temple vision; nor are the straightness of their legs, their calves’ hooves, and their comparison with “burnished bronze” (1:7). The four different faces of each creature (1:10) are merely summarily mentioned in 10:22; they are listed only in 10:14, a late gloss¹¹³ that substitutes the bull face with the face of a cherub and distributes the four faces among the four cherubim. In addition, the positions of the creatures’ wings are explained repeatedly in 1:8-9, 11, 23 but never in Chapter 10. Strikingly, the omitted aspects are those least easily applicable to cherubim who usually have the body and feet of a lion, and, as quadrupeds, can scarcely hold their wings as described in Chapter 1.¹¹⁴ Specifically the cherubim statues of the temple were coated with gold, not bronze-coloured. Therefore, the creatures described in Ezek 1 are not identical to those in Ezek 10 – despite the similarities.¹¹⁵ The very fact that a later redaction found it necessary to insist so adamantly on their exchangeability (10:15, 20, 22) confirms this. For the same reason, the two kinds of composite creatures have preserved different names in the two visions: חַיּוֹת and כְּרֻבִּים.¹¹⁶ It is precisely this inconsistency that makes it very

¹¹² For instance, Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 316f. emphasizes this strongly. However, the number of occurrences in chap. 10 is still considerable: דְּמוּת 1:5ac, 10a, [16b,] 22a, 26a₂c [*bis*], 28c / 10:1b₂, 10a, 21c, 22a_p; כְּמַרְאֵה [כְּ] 1:13b, 26a₂c, 27b, 28a_p / 8:2bcd, 4a; 10:1b₂, 9e, 10a_p, 22b.

¹¹³ This is – as pointed out in Chap. 3.1.1 – suggested by the fact that LXX does not represent this verse, while in MT it interrupts its context quite violently.

¹¹⁴ Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 148.

¹¹⁵ Also Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 125f. arrives at this conclusion.

On the opposite, Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 319 offers a table enumerating the differences between “traditional” cherubim and Ezek 1 but nevertheless takes their identification in chap. 10 as literal. Also Odell, *Ezekiel*, 26 concludes that “Ezekiel’s living beings bear little resemblance” to cherubim, even though she later accepts the identification (p. 118).

¹¹⁶ Representatives of the synchronic or “holistic” approach (for instance Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 54f, 198; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 90, 319f; Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 32, 132-134),

unlikely that the same author wrote the vision of the Glory and the cherubim redaction: it makes no sense that one author would introduce different creatures with the same function and moreover picture them in a way that tries to make them seem identical.¹¹⁷

6.4.1.2 The Cherubim Redaction's Dependence on Ezek 1

The above comparison indicates that the cherubim redaction in Ezek 10 was heavily influenced by 1:4-28* and not vice versa. While we need to bear in mind that 10:2, 4, 6-7*, 18-19* are, as part of the original first temple vision account, older than the vision of the Glory,¹¹⁸ there are several reasons for assuming that the cherubim redaction depends on 1:4-28*.

In the first place, as we have seen, Ezek 1 speaks in an unspecific way of הַיּוֹת, whereas the cherubim redaction in Ezek 10 employs the much more precise term כְּרֻבִים. However, in 10:17c the editor has accidentally left the original term הַחַיָּה from its *Vorlage* 1:20-21, without changing it into כְּרֻבִים, thus accounting for its provenance.

Secondly, the four four-faced beings beneath the platform and the throne are more fitting in the theophanic context of Ezek 1 than in the vision narrative of Ezek 8-11. In the original first temple vision, the cherubim (as temple features) and the Glory of YHWH are appropriate temple imagery. YHWH's throne are the cherubim statues in the most holy place, which he leaves behind; a transportable

usually explain the difference in nomenclature by assuming Ezekiel would have been able to identify the creatures seen in 1:5-26 with cherubim only once he saw them again in the context of the temple, in Chap. 10.

¹¹⁷ Contra, e.g., Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 232. His hypothesis that 1:4-2:8 and Ezek 10 derive "vom selben Verfasserkreis" overlooks the differences, as do authors with a synchronic-harmonizing approach.

¹¹⁸ Refer to Sections 6.2.1.2, 6.3.1. Considering that Ezek 8-11* is older than Ezek 1:1-2:2*, it is very likely that elements from 8-11* influenced the *writing* of 1:1-2:2*, rather than resulting in secondary additions (e.g. the coals of fire, see 6.3.4.3). On the ensuing arguments, see also (although I do not concur with all of his conclusions): Houk, "Final Redaction."

throne is per se not required. By contrast, in the theophanic context of Chapter 1, the four living beings with their double function as sky bearers and throne bearers are fitting symbols of YHWH's universal and unlimited authority.¹¹⁹

Thirdly, from a structural viewpoint, the description in 1:4-28* proceeds in a double movement from bottom to top and from a general impression at a distance to a close-up view.¹²⁰ Within the cherubim redaction, nothing analogous to this order can be observed; on the contrary, various elements come into view in an apparently random order,¹²¹ to the point that they would not be intelligible to a reader unfamiliar with Ezek 1. For example, the unexpected mentioning of “*the dome* (הַרְרָקִיעַ)” and of a sapphire throne “over the head of *the* cherubim” in 10:1 and the “likeness with the appearance of a man” in 8:2-3 make only sense if one bears 1:22-28 still in mind. It seems safe to affirm that while the aim of 1:4-28 is to portray an extraordinary sight as graphically as possible – employing directional prepositions and comparisons with different materials and familiar objects – the impression given in Chapter 10 is rather one of recalling an already known image, where the mentioning of one single aspect suffices to import its whole awesomeness.¹²²

Lastly, some authors see in the smoother reading of Chapter 10, without the grammatical (gender) confusion of Chapter 1, a sign for its later date.¹²³ This argument is however ambiguous because precisely the association with the (masculine) cherubim could have provoked the attribution of masculine forms to the feminine הַיּוֹת.

¹¹⁹ Refer to Chaps 2.4.2.3 and 9.2.1. In spite of this, it should still be considered that the general composition of YHWH's Glory on a throne made of composite creatures is already an analogy to the most holy place in the temple – with deliberate similarities and dissimilarities.

¹²⁰ Refer back to Chap. 2.4.2.2.

¹²¹ For example Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 145 qualifies it as “*ziemlich planlos*.”

¹²² Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 121 explains the use of definite article, particularly in 10:1, “in order to point the reader back to Ezekiel 1.”

¹²³ So e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 28; Houk, “Final Redaction,” 46-47; see also Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 139f. For a critical view, see Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 118.

In summary, the cherubim redaction in Ezek 8-11 could occur only after the vision of the Glory of YHWH had been written. At the same time, the considerable differences between the humanoid living beings of Ezek 1 and the cherubim of Ezek 10, as well as their forced identification, make it very unlikely that the vision of the Glory and the cherubim redaction derive from the same author. The cherubim redaction is later and by a different hand than the vision of the Glory of YHWH.

6.4.2 The Two Wheel Redactions (1:15-21 and 10:9-12, 16-17)

To both visions (of the living beings in 1:4-28* and of the living cherubim in redacted Chapters 8-11), a later redaction added the, rather bewildering, appearance of wheels (1:15-21; 10:9-12, 16-17).¹²⁴

The two descriptions of the wheels and of the manner in which they move are again very similar. A closer observation demonstrates that the reliance of Ezek 10 on Ezek 1 holds true even for these passages. There are small but noticeable differences in the description of the wheels and in their way of moving that try to make the text more intelligible in 10:9-17.¹²⁵ In particular this is noticeable in 10:9, 11 where clarifications regarding the number and position of the wheels and the direction of their moving, respectively, have been inserted. The resulting text is therefore slightly longer than its parallel verses 1:15, 17 but it is more comprehensible. A reverse dependence¹²⁶ or even an identical authorship would not be able to explain this data. An exception to this is 10:12 where, in a longer and more elaborated text than in its parallel verse 1:18, the eyes seem to appear all over the wheels *and* the cherubim, which however is of no assistance to the reader's understanding.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Refer back to Chaps 2.2.3 and 3.2.4.

¹²⁵ On 10:9-17 as a clarification to 1:15-21, see Halperin, "Exegetical Character," 132-135.

¹²⁶ As proposed for example by Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 118.

¹²⁷ The wheels' eyes in 1:18 are regarded by some as dependent on the cherubim covered with eyes in 10:12; so e.g., with an iconographic rationale, Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, "Ezekiel 1," 149f.

On the other hand, redaction criticism has shown that living cherubim and wheels were introduced into Ezek 10 in separate steps.¹²⁸ This is only reasonable if at the time of the cherubim redaction the wheels were still absent from Ezek 1. In other words, the wheel redaction in 1:15-21 occurred only after the cherubim redaction because otherwise both features would have been inserted into Chapter 10 together.

6.4.3 Summary

In review of the results, the order of the redactions that connected Ezek 1 and 10 so closely can be outlined as follows:

- 1) The original temple vision Ezek 8-11* narrates the exit of the Glory of YHWH from the temple; it mentions temple cherubim.
- 2) The vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1, 3-2:2; 3:12-14*) is added in front of the call narrative. It describes four composite living beings beneath the throne of YHWH.
- 3) A second redactor introduces elements of the description of these living beings into Chapter 10 but maintains the name *cherubim*.
- 4) A third redactor inserts the wheels in 1:15-21.
- 5) A fourth redactor further harmonizes the two visions by adding the wheels also in 10:9-17*.

The insertion of numerous allusions and direct quotations from 1:5-26 into the temple vision rendered the departure of the Glory from the temple as magnificent as his appearance by the riverside in exile.¹²⁹ Simultaneously, the incorporation of the sky bearers' descriptions accentuated the divine liberty over any spatial restriction,

However, because of the corrupt textual condition of 1:18, any assessment in this case is doubtful. The impression is that of secondary and tertiary elements influencing each other.

¹²⁸ Refer back to Chap. 3.2.

¹²⁹ "The glory of God was to be praised even in the midst of his active judgement." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 256. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 241.

even the temple. Vice versa, the equation “living beings = cherubim” retrospectively applied sacral temple imagery to the vision at the Chebar river and thereby enhanced its authority even further.¹³⁰ The addition of the wheels in 1:15-21 increased the focus on divine mobility; the equivalent addition in 10:9-17* contributes to a greater coherence among the two vision accounts.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to precisely date the work of the second to fourth redactor. They necessarily gave their contribution to the text before the explicit identity statements and “redactional vision accounts” endeavoured to provide the book with its present coherence.¹³¹ The second and fourth redactor especially demonstrate (in Chapter 10) a similar interest in harmonization. This would suggest some temporal difference to the original layers and to the vision of the Glory of YHWH; yet any attempt of an exact dating of these redactions is left to guesswork.¹³²

6.5 *The Vision of the River (47:1-12*)*

Interestingly, the second temple vision, Ezek 40-48, has remained largely untouched by the above described redactional activities.¹³³ The only cherubim appearing within the vision of the new temple are in the description of the interior of the temple, a section widely recognised as a relatively late addition.¹³⁴ It mentions two-faced cherubim images carved as decoration on the temple walls and doors (41:17-20, 25). Certainly those adornments no more than faintly resemble the living cherubim of Ezek 10.

¹³⁰ Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 238.

¹³¹ Refer to Section 6.6.

¹³² Uehlinger and Müller Trufaut, “Ezekiel 1,” 151 seem to date them to the late sixth and to the fourth century, respectively.

¹³³ It remains an open question why the living cherubim were inserted into the first temple vision but not into the second. Possibly, the redaction occurred at a time when the second temple vision had already attracted some legal material to it, so its character did not offer itself for such esoteric speculations. Or perhaps the monstrous creatures were not felt appropriate for the vision of re-established order and stability. Nielsen, “Visionary Call as Prologue,” 111f; and Simon, “Geometric Vision,” 419. Yet another interpretation of the sobriety in 40-48 is offered (from a synchronic viewpoint) by Middlemas, “Transformation of the Image,” 135f.

¹³⁴ Refer to Chap. 5.3.2, also Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 60.

Instead, the second temple vision has had its own additions. Among those subunits of Ezek 40-48 analysed in the previous chapter, the most prominent is the expansion of 40:1-43:10* through the vision of the healing river (47:1-12*); linked to that is the permanent closure of the east gate (44:1-2).

6.5.1 Date and Authorship

We noticed that 47:1-12 uses images of nature to convey its message of blessing and new creation.¹³⁵ Since it shares this characteristic with many oracles in Second Isaiah, 47:1-12 seems to fit best in the time of ending exile and unlimited hopes. Indeed, the vision of the river is commonly dated in the late exilic or early post-exilic period.¹³⁶ Because the fantastic-unrealistic expectations do not show any factual experience of return, I would prefer to date it slightly earlier, perhaps in the 540's or around the year 539.

Is it possible that 47:1-12* is from the same author as the original temple vision in 40:1-43:10*? There is a certain tendency among exegetes to defend an Ezekielian authorship for the vision of the river¹³⁷ – often in the sense of a later addition by the prophet himself, in order to accommodate the differences between 40:1-43:10* and 47:1-12. It seems safe to say that 47:1-12 stands in the *tradition* of the prophet we call Ezekiel, since the consequences the vision draws from YHWH's presence in the temple not only pose no contrast to 40:1-43:10* but also allude appropriately to Chapters 8-9. The man's question in 47:6b echoes 8:6b, 12b, 15b, 17b and the healing water is “going out from the sanctuary” (אצׁ 47:12e) just as the six destroyers had gone out (אצׁ 9:7d) beginning their macabre work “at my

¹³⁵ Refer to Chap. 5.5.2.

¹³⁶ For example, Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1242, 1247f. sees in 47:1-12 the last enlargement of the temple vision that still occurred during the exile, performed by Ezekiel. He dates it between 571-538. Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 239f. includes 47:1-12 in his “first expansion,” which he dates around 539-515.

¹³⁷ “Die Mehrzahl der Exegeten ist daran interessiert, 47,1-12 für den Propheten zu retten. ... Implizit oder explizit im Hintergrund steht dabei die Bewertung des Textes als ‘unkultisch’ im Gegensatz zu den Bestimmungen von Ezek 44-46.” Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 192.

sanctuary” (9:6d). Yet if 47:1-12* was indeed written towards the end of the exile, assigning it to “Ezekiel” means stretching the career of this prophet over a period of a minimum of forty years. By contrast, while 1:1-2:2*; 3:12, 14* is almost certainly exilic and possibly older than the vision of the river (in or after 569), an Ezekielian authorship of the vision of Glory has been discarded because of text-internal tensions.¹³⁸ Hence it is questionable that 47:1-12* was authored by Ezekiel himself; it seems more probable that it was written by one of his followers, friends, or disciples.

6.5.2 Relationship with Other Layers

As the visual overview at the beginning of this chapter shows, this redaction remains, although very fitting in the context of the second temple vision, relatively isolated in the network of the vision accounts.

The vision of the river (47:1-12*) expands and, as it were, completes 40:1-43:10*; it presupposes only the original layer and 44:1-2 but has no apparent connection to any other part of Ezek 40-48. Apart from this reliance on the second temple vision, there are the abovementioned allusions to the first temple vision (e.g. 47:6b), along with a recurrence of the number four (four measurements of the river). In addition, the repeated statement that everything “will live” (חַיִּי/יִחְיֶה 47:9b₂h) recalls the promise חַיִּי in 37:5c, 6e, 14b (and חַיִּי 10d), as the gift of life is now extended even to the non-human creation.

Besides these few references, the vision of the river of life does not hold notable points of contact to, and is itself not presupposed by, any other redactional layer. It shares however with the Vision of the Glory of YHWH, especially in 47:9,

¹³⁸ See above section 6.3.2.

terminological similarities to the Priestly writings, in particular to the flood account.¹³⁹

6.6 *Later Redactions*

At a late stage in the redaction history of the vision accounts in Ezekiel, a particular group of insertions is introduced. Though involving only a relatively small quantity of text, these additions contribute decisively to the book’s typical coherence, as through them the final vision accounts appear particularly interconnected to the reader. These anaphoric insertions are of two kinds, comprising seven explicit back-references and identity statements and two redactionally compiled short vision accounts.¹⁴⁰

Both groups of insertions shall now briefly be compared and their function explained. The section finishes with a few words on the redaction in 37:7-10.

6.6.1 **The Explicit Back-References and Identity Statements (3:23; 8:4; 10:13, 15bc, 20, 22ab; 43:3)**

The occurrences of the explicit back-references and identity statements are displayed for comparison in the table below:

וְהִנֵּה-שָׁמַיִם כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה עֹמֵד כְּכֹבֹד אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי עַל-נְהַר-כְּבָר	3:23c d
וְהִנֵּה-שָׁמַיִם כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּמֵּרְאָה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי בְּבִקְעָה:	8:4a b
לְאוֹפָנִים לְהֵם קוֹרָא הַגִּלְגָּל בְּאַזְנֵי:	10:13a _p a

¹³⁹ Refer to Chap. 5.5.2. References from both Ezek 1 and 47:1-12 meet in particular in Gen 9:16: “When the bow is in the clouds (הַקֶּשֶׁת בַּעֲנָן), I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature (כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה) of all flesh that is on the earth” (NRSV).

¹⁴⁰ In the chart at the beginning of this chapter, these are represented through yellow shapes that are connected by thicker lines, to express their similarity. Since it is through these noticeable linkages that the final vision accounts appear particularly interconnected to the reader, the line along the “present texts” shapes is also coloured in yellow.

היא החיה אשר ראיתי בנהר־כבר	10:15b c
היא החיה אשר ראיתי תחת אלהי־ישראל בנהר־כבר ואדע פי כרובים המה:	10:20a b c d
ודמות פניהם המה הפנים אשר ראיתי על־נהר־כבר (מראיהם ואותם)	10:22a _p a b
ו(כמראה) המראה אשר ראיתי כמראה אשר־ראיתי בבאי לשחת את־העיר ומראות (כמראה) אשר ראיתי אל־נהר־כבר	43:3a ₁ b a ₂ c d e

Table 22 – Back-References and Identity Statements

We observed a certain tendency toward harmonization in the redaction of the three largest vision accounts (1:1-3:15; 8-11; 40-48), particularly regarding the vision of the Glory and the first temple vision. It was also a result of redaction criticism¹⁴¹ that a later redactor added explicit identity statements to the implicit equation of the cherubim with the “living beings” (10:15bc, 20, 22a_p-b). These three verses hark back to the vision “at the river Chebar,” i.e. to 1:1-3:15, and focus specifically on the identity of הַיּוֹת and cherubim (in the case of v. 22, of their faces). A different style can be observed, with regard to the wheels, in 10:13 where only the nomenclature is declared synonymous, without any reference to an earlier vision.

More generally, 8:4 refers to the “Glory of the God of Israel” meaning the apparition the prophet had “seen in the valley,” i.e. 3:22-27. There, the reader will find no description but another, very similar back-reference (3:23cd) to the vision “at the river Chebar”: 1:1-3:15. The same technique recurs again in 43:3, only that there, toward the end of the book, the redactor recalls two instances: the current apparition, he reminds the reader, looks the same as in the vision of the destruction of the city (43:3c, referring to 8-11) and that “at the river Chebar” (43:3e, referring to 1:1-3:15).

¹⁴¹ Refer to Chap. 3.2.3.5.

Hence there are certain differences between the single back-references. Nevertheless, they display appreciable similarities and, in particular, produce the same effect: that of linking the respective vision accounts clearly and unmistakably to each other. Remarkably, this redactional network of references includes only 1:1-3:15; 3:22-27; 8-11; 40:1-43:10, i.e. all and only those visions where the Glory of YHWH plays a role. Neither the vision of the valley of bones in 37:1-14 nor the vision of the river in 47:1-12 has attracted this kind of additions, and the vision of the scroll is only included as sort of annex to the vision of the Glory.

It is further interesting which “title” is given, in each back-reference, to the respective vision: while 1:1-3:15 and 3:22-27 are identified throughout by their location (3:23d; 10:15bc, 20, 22ab; 43:3e: “by the river” / 8:4: “in the valley”), Ezek 8-11 is referred to by its content (43:3c). Despite the context of the *return* of the Glory of YHWH in 43:2-5, it is not the *departure* of the divine presence that is evoked but the destruction of the city. Perhaps the redactor wanted the reader to bear in mind that in devastation, in exile, and in the restoration of order – always the same divine power is at work.

6.6.2 The Redactional Vision Accounts (3:22-27; 44:4-5d, 6)

6.6.2.1 Ezek 3:22-27

In the present sequence of the book, the first instance of an explicit back-reference occurs in 3:23. This verse belongs to the entirely redactional compilation of visionary elements in 3:22-27.¹⁴² Since there is no reason to separate 3:23 redaction-critically from its environment, at least in this instance there is an immediate connection between the redactional techniques of explicitly back-referencing and that of compilation. In other words: the redactor who inserted 3:22-27 used both methods;

¹⁴² Refer to Chap. 2.7.

he crafted a “vision account” out of pre-existing elements, probably to introduce, in a seamless connection to 1:1-3:15, Ezekiel’s muteness and his being housebound, which then recurs in the sign-acts collection in Ezek 4-5; and he included in this an explicit reference to his source.

The phrases, which 3:22-27 adopts from 1:1-3:15, have already been listed in Section 2.7. Some of them recur in either or both of the original temple visions; for instance כבוד יהוה (3:23c; 10:4ac, 18a; 11:23a; 43:4a, 5c) and נאפל אל־פני (I fell on my face: 3:23e; 9:8c).¹⁴³ Both expressions were probably used first in Ezek 8-11*, then adopted into the vision of the Glory and finally from there into 3:22-27. In addition, the redactor copied from 37:1-14* the location הַבְּקִיעָה (the valley: 3:22d, 23b; 37:1c, 2b).¹⁴⁴ There it denotes the valley of bones, without an apparition of the Glory of YHWH. In the same vision we find the oldest succession of ריחב ... ותבוא and עמד על־רגלי (37:10ce; 2:2ac; 3:24ab). The redactor probably borrowed, again in this instance, from 1:1-3:15 and thus only indirectly from the vision of the bones.

6.6.2.2 Ezek 44:4-5d, 6

There is one other occasion in Ezekiel where a redactor utilized compilation in order to connect two disparate pieces of texts: in the case of 44:4-5d, 6, it is the collection of laws that needs to be incorporated into the visionary context of Ezek 40-48 at their respective redactional stage.¹⁴⁵ This compiled vision is mainly formed out of elements from 40:4; 43:1-10;¹⁴⁶ but 44:6 also takes up expressions from the vision of the scroll (2:3-3:15*): the adjective מְרִי (rebellious: 44:6a; 2:5c, 6g, 7d, 8c *bis*; 3:9d) and the combination of נְאֻמַּיְתָּה plus subsequent messenger

¹⁴³ The wording נאפל אל־פני occurs also in 11:13 (together with “and I cried out,” like in 9:8); in 1:28; 43:3; 44:4. The only genuinely Ezekielian occurrence is 9:8.

¹⁴⁴ The term הַבְּקִיעָה occurs only in Ezek 3:22-23; 8:4; 37:1-2 and fourteen more times in the Old Testament. Interestingly, in Ezekiel it is used always with article, as though an established, generally known place was meant.

¹⁴⁵ Tuell, *Law of the Temple*, 57f.

¹⁴⁶ Refer to Chap. 5.3.3.2.

formula (44:6ab; 2:4cd; 3:11de). It is likely, however, that both instances are mediated by 3:22-27 where the same phrases recur (מָרָה: 3:26d, 27g; ... וְאָמַרְתָּ: 27cd). Additionally, 44:6c repeats the key term of Ezek 8, תוֹעֲבוֹת, and 44:4cd is an abridged version of 10:4.

Given their shortness, both 3:22-27 and 44:4-5d show a marked interest in the prophet's reaction as they both feature the phrase "and I fell upon my face" (וַאֲפֹל וְעַל-פָּנָי 3:23; 44:4; first used in 9:8c) before the beginning of the divine speech. Perhaps this is supposed to underscore the importance of the following address and to evoke a similar attitude of reverence in the reader.¹⁴⁷

6.6.2.3 Function and Date

The effect and intention also of this second kind of insertion is harmonizing; it aims at the creation of a coherent book as opposed to an unrelated anthology of writings. While back-referencing connects comparable texts at some distance, the compilation technique facilitates the unification of two existing text blocks.

Whether all insertions employing either of these two methods in effect derive from the same redactor remains of course speculative. Because of the similar concern recognizable behind it, and because of the connection via 3:23, it might be an acceptable simplification to treat them as one redaction.¹⁴⁸

As for the date, at least 44:4-5d, 6 is certainly post-exilic, for it cannot be older than the law corpus; and the laws presuppose an existing temple. Konkel, for example, dates his "second expansion," which includes also 44:4-6, to the fifth

¹⁴⁷ Note that in its original occurrence 9:8, וַאֲפֹל וְעַל-פָּנָי was *not* placed before a divine speech but before the only speech *of the prophet* in a desperate attempt to intercede for his fellow people.

¹⁴⁸ As we have seen (6.2.3.3), the redaction combining and inserting 11:1-13, 14-21, 22 into its present vision context also uses compilation methods. It is questionable whether this similarity is sufficient for including that redaction into this group. Differently from 3:22-27 or 44:4-6*, the redactor of 11:1-22 did not put a short vision at the beginning of the material to be connected, just *after* a vision account, but he framed the first of the two disputation words with elements from 8-11* and incorporated both oracles *into* the existing account.

century,¹⁴⁹ while Zimmerli assigns the explicit references to prior appearances of the Glory to the *Endredaktion* of the book without proposing a more precise date.¹⁵⁰ Leaving aside the decision for a particular century, for our purposes it will suffice to define these harmonizing editorial efforts as post-exilic.

6.6.3 The Redaction in 37:7-10

The introduction of a second stage in the resurrection of the bones, 37:7ab, 8e-10b is often dated to the second century (Maccabean era) as it seems to affirm hope in an eschatological individual resurrection.¹⁵¹ This widespread stance has been disproven, for example, by Tromp and Schnocks;¹⁵² thus a precise dating of 37:7ab, 8e-10b is not possible. It still seems likely, however, that this redaction is among the most recent redactions of Ezekiel's vision accounts and at least post-exilic.

Contributing to this impression is the fact that 37:7ab, 8e-10b is a somewhat freestanding redaction. Its intention (to insert a retarding element) and its linguistic characteristics (*w^eqatal* replacing *wayyiqtol* in 7a, 10a) are unlike any of the previously discussed redactions. The idea of the hypostatic “Spirit” (הַרִיחַ) may, to a certain degree, be related to the hypostatic concept of the “Glory of the God of Israel” in 8:4, but this similarity is limited to the general notion of personalised divine attributes and, while it is a sign for a late origin, it is not a sign for common authorship.

¹⁴⁹ After the inauguration of the second temple in 515; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 346-348.

¹⁵⁰ Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 42*.

¹⁵¹ The first to see an “apocalyptic” tendency, especially in 37:9, was Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 305-317. The Maccabean date was first argued by Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 385-389. It is widely adopted, e.g. by Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 321-324; Wahl, “Tod und Leben,” 235-239; Pohlmann and Rudnig, *Hesekiel 20-48*, 497f; Mosis, “Ezechiel 37,1-14,” 169f; Schöpflin, “Revivification,” 80-82.

¹⁵² Tromp, “Can These Bones Live?,” 61-78; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 172-174. See also the criticism on finding *Hypostasenspekulation* in 37:9 by *ibid.*, 207f. and Konkel, “Bund und Neuschöpfung,” 126.

There is a well-known similarity between 11:1-13 and 37:1-14 in their final forms,¹⁵³ which is probably owing to reciprocal influences during the redaction processes of the two texts. Frequently observed is the comparable role of the prophet, whose proclamation has a significant effect within the vision: the death of Pelatiah (11:13) and the revivification of the bones (37:7-10), respectively.¹⁵⁴ In this case, the redactor who combined 11:1-13, 14-21 and inserted them into the first temple vision most likely borrowed from 37:1-14*; in particular 11:13a is dependent on 37:7c. Conversely, the twofold command to prophesy (11:4ab; 37:9bc)¹⁵⁵ seems to be original in the cauldron word and would have been taken up from there into the redaction of 37:7-10.

6.7 Conclusion of Part I

In this chapter, the growing interrelationships of the vision accounts in the book of Ezekiel have been traced from the two-pairs connection between the four original vision accounts by the very prophet (roughly between the late 590's and the 570's) up to the salient network of implicit and explicit references created and augmented from after 569 through to post-exilic times.¹⁵⁶

Among the “original writings,” the second temple vision (40:1-43:10*) is from the outset connected as a counterpart to the older temple vision in Ezek 8-11*, revolving around the topic of the presence of YHWH in the temple and among his people. The call narrative (2:3-3:15*) and the vision of the bones (37:1-14*), on the other hand, have elements of sign-acts and prophetic oracles in common; they too are

¹⁵³ Observed e.g. by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 889; Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 310-312; Allen, “Death Valley Vision,” 134; Schöpflin, “Destructive and Creative Word,” 113-118.

¹⁵⁴ “Es geht bei diesem Prophetenwort [i.e. 11:1-13] also genauso um das Bewirken von Tod und Leben wie bei der Prophetie in Ezek 37:1-10.“ Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 172.

¹⁵⁵ Similar just once more in 34:2 (... יְשָׂאֵל הַנְּבִיאַתְּ אֶת־בְּנֵי־אָדָם) but there with the preceding address “son of man.”

¹⁵⁶ Probably the book of Ezekiel reached its basic shape still during the Babylonian Exile; post-exilic additions are quantitatively minor. For a summary of reasons for a prevalently exilic date of the book, see e.g. Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 77f.

counterparts, though the connection is more subtle. Thus, on the earliest level of a collection of Ezekiel's writings, two visions of judgement are juxtaposed to two visions of restoration, forming two pairs: the prophet sent to announce "lamentations and mourning" – the prophet witnesses the Glory of YHWH abandoning the temple – the prophet sent to announce new life – the prophet witnesses the new temple and the Glory of YHWH returning. Moreover, the motif of supernatural translocation, first employed in the prophet's visionary journey to Jerusalem (8:1-3*; 11:24-25), is picked up in 37:1 and 40:1, in deliberate reference. The particular wording of this introduction thus becomes a specialty of Ezekielian vision accounts. Already at this level, the vision accounts are a structure that ensures cohesion, in form and content, to the early collection of writings.

The redactional vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12, 14*) enhances the connection between the call vision, to which it is an expansion, and the temple visions, but at the same time it obscures the arrangement of two pairs. The author-redactor imitates the frame of 8:1-3*; 11:24-25 and adopts phrases from the older accounts. In particular, he includes a date and the term *כְּבוֹד יְהוָה*. As a result, the network of three large cross-referenced vision accounts, from the beginning of the book, through the judgement part, up to the definitive restoration, comes more into evidence – though at the expense of 37:1-14*. Still, the expansion creates a greater impression of unity, and it enhances the credibility of the prophetic writings, especially of the promises of deliverance, in the face of their delayed realization.

Ensuing redactions increase the coherence of the book further. In particular, Ezek 1 and 10 are more and more assimilated, through the introduction of the living throne, and later throne-chariot, at the Glory's departure from the temple in Ezek 10. Why the second temple vision (especially 43:1-10*) is excluded from this, remains obscure. Possibly, the daunting *Mischwesen* are felt inappropriate in the protected

and orderly world envisaged in Ezekiel's last great vision. In general, the linkage among the three largest vision accounts is nevertheless strengthened through these harmonizing redactions.

The Babylonian exile is probably already in Israel's past when explicit back-references and short, redactionally compiled vision accounts are introduced to provide even stronger and more immediately evident bonds among the three *ḵבוֹד* visions. The aim of these redactions seems not to consist any more in reinforcing the content, but rather in editorial-aesthetic concerns, in particular coherence and unity, which is an outstanding characteristic in the present canonical book of Ezekiel. It is precisely this harmonizing effort in many redactions, the adopting of phrases from older accounts, along with the imitation of Ezekiel's own particular style, that creates the typical "Ezekielian" difficulty in determining redaction.

Apart from the harmonizing layers just mentioned, there are other expansions and revisions of the vision accounts, such as the vision of the river in 47:1-12, the partial judgement revision in Ezek 9, the incorporation of cult laws and boundary settings in Ezek 43-48, not to mention the enormous amount of small-scale glosses that undoubtedly occurred over a long period of time.

While this complicated genesis certainly produced complex, if not to say difficult, texts – the unbroken interest of later generations in Ezekiel's visions is also evidence for their great theological potential. Prophets are compelled to interpret history – present, past, and future – from what they understand as God's point of view. The more urgent and vital the questions are to their audience, and the more helpful the prophetic interpretation, the more important become the prophetic writings and the more likely they are to be re-read and adapted in the light of later experiences. A merely one-dimensional reading of Ezekiel that does not take into account the multifaceted history of the text and the diversity of its authors and their

agendas ultimately cannot, in my opinion, do justice to the book and its theological contents.

With the understanding gained so far of the redaction history and the interrelatedness of the vision accounts in Ezekiel, we are now able to move on to reflect, in the following chapters, on the developments of selected narrative and theological aspects from the original writings throughout this history.

PART II: Theology in a Diachronic Perspective

7. Discourse and Rhetoric: How the Vision Accounts “Function”

The previous chapter concluded with the statement that, in order to give appropriate consideration to Ezekiel’s vision accounts, in particular to their theology, the interpreter needs to bear in mind their redaction history and the diverse agendas of their multiple authors. The present part of this thesis is understood as an exercise in precisely this kind of interpretation. It will touch upon three different topics from the perspective of how their treatment in the text changes throughout the process of redaction. Not all redactional stages will be significant for each topic and so, apart from the original writings, only selected redactional layers will be discussed.

The present chapter will avail itself of a range of questions and methods typically at home in narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism.¹ We shall first look

¹ With regard to narrative criticism I refer to Berlin, *Poetic*; Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*. The methods described there are also part of the set of rhetorical-critical methods by Tribble, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 101-106 and, more concisely, Olson, “Literary and Rhetorical Criticism,” 23f.

Of course, this implies that I see the vision accounts as *literature*. I am concerned neither with possible pre-textual stages nor with the “real” experiences of Ezekiel. “The narration is told not in

at the four original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*) and analyse the dynamics of point of view and the portrayal of the main characters. This examination of *how the stories are told* will then help to shed light on the question of what response the narratives were designed to provoke in their historical audience,² which of course pertains to rhetoric.³ Due to this combination of interests, the method of this chapter is situated at the borderline between narrative criticism and rhetorical criticism.

We will see that, different from other biblical narratives,⁴ the character of the prophet is always identical to the first-person narrator.⁵ He also functions as a role model, the figure with whom the audience is meant to empathize. The portrayal of the prophet, and the question whether it changes throughout the redaction process, is therefore of central interest. The redactional layers that will be discussed are the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*), the vision of the river (47:1-12*), and the redactional vision in 3:22-27.

7.1 *Discourse and Rhetoric in the Original Vision Accounts*

7.1.1 Point(s) of View

The notion of point of view can effectively be outlined by the following comparison: “Biblical narrative, like most modern prose narrative, narrates like film.

order to convey the literal rendition of things that happened, as they happened, but in order to tell, persuade, convince, teach, challenge and, last but not least, rebut opinions, create meaning and convey an all-round religious message.” Silvio Sergio Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” *JHScr* 8, Article 13 (2008): 2, cf. 7f., 27-29.

² I will be using the term *addressees* for any listeners within the text, and the term *audience* for the real-world recipients of the text (historical reader, the exilic community). On the relationship of addressees and audience from a speech-act theory perspective, see Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 71-76.

³ The genre “prophetic vision account” is inherently suasive, as pointed out by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 61-75, and Samuel Amsler, “La parole visionnaire des prophètes,” *VT* 31 (1981): 361f. An example for this kind of rhetorical analysis of the book of Ezekiel as a whole (in its present form) is Renz, *Rhetorical Function*.

⁴ Biblical narratives other than in the prophetic books typically feature an omniscient third-person narrator (e.g. in the Abraham stories in Gen 12-25).

⁵ The prophet-narrator is a character within the text and therefore not identical to a historical person; he needs to be distinguished from the author. See Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 3f. I will reserve the name “Ezekiel” to refer to the author of the original layers.

The narrator is the camera eye; we ‘see’ the story through what he presents.”⁶ In other words, the readers’ impression of the narrative is filtered through what, and how, the narrator (or another speaker) tells them. This embraces several planes; for our purposes, it will suffice to discuss the psychological plane (through whose perception the reader follows the scene; external vs. internal view) and the ideological plane (whose opinion and judgements are given to the reader, and how).⁷

7.1.1.1 The Narrator’s Point of View

Despite the differences between the four original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8:1-11:25*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*), their use of point of view is largely constant. In all four, as in the entire book, the figure of the prophet functions as the first-person narrator.⁸ As a rule, “With first-person narration, point of view is fixed in the first-person narrator; the elements of the story are filtered through the mind of the narrator.”⁹ Hence in the original vision accounts the reader “sees” and “hears” only what the narrator sees and hears; for example, in Ezek 8 the reader moves with the prophet-narrator from one location to the next and discovers, as it were, with him what is happening there.

At the same time, however, the reader is hardly ever granted access to the prophet-narrator’s mind. Save for the impassive verbs of perception ראה (2:9a; 8:10b; 37:8a) and שמע (3:12b; 43:6a) and other rare exceptions – for instance the note that the prophet-narrator left the place of the vision “bitter in the heat of my spirit”

⁶ Berlin, *Poetics*, 44.

⁷ The distinction of these planes was developed by Boris Andrejevic Uspensky, *A Poetics of Composition: The Structure of the Artistic Text and Typology of a Compositional Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973). I have accessed his work indirectly in Berlin, *Poetics*, 55f. and Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 30-34, 156-182. Uspensky distinguishes five planes; I am disregarding here the temporal, the spatial, and the phraseological plane.

⁸ In Konkel’s words, “inszeniert sich das Buch vom ersten bis zum letzten Wort als authentischer Augenzeugenbericht. Der Leser wird vom ersten Satz an in das surreale Erleben des Propheten hineingezogen.” Konkel, “Prophet ohne Eigenschaften,” 221.

On Ezekiel as autobiographical literature, see Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 3-13.

⁹ Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 154.

(3:14c)¹⁰ – the point of view on the psychological plane remains *external* to the prophet-narrator. The reader is not informed about his feelings, thoughts or anything of his inner life. Narrator comments also are rare; apart from the dates (8:1; 40:1) and very few explanations¹¹ the prophet-narrator only describes what he sees, hears, and does.

We can conclude that the visions are narrated, on the *external psychological plane*, from the prophet-narrator's point of view.

7.1.1.2 YHWH's Point of View

Interestingly, however, the point of view on the *ideological plane* is principally YHWH's. What each vision displays to the prophet – and to the reader – invariably reflects YHWH's position on the respective matter. This effect is achieved in two ways: through divine discourse and through control over the prophet-narrator's perception.

Direct speech typically reflects the speaking character's point of view.¹² Since YHWH talks frequently,¹³ and the prophet-narrator refrains almost entirely from manifesting any opinion or judgement,¹⁴ the only point of view that the reader is able to distinguish on the ideological plane is YHWH's. For example, in the call narrative, the divine speeches (2:3-8; 3:4-11) delineate how YHWH thinks about Israel ("rebels" 2:3b; "not willing to listen" 3:7b; "stubborn heart" 3:7c ...), and how he wishes his prophet to be ("not afraid" 2:6abe; 3:9b; "not rebellious" 2:8c; "listen"

¹⁰ Another good example of a point of view internal to the narrator's mind is the information that the scroll tasted "as sweet as honey" (3:3f). This is a fact not observable from the outside.

¹¹ For example, one narrator comment defines Tel-Abib as "where they [i.e. the exiles] were living" (3:15b); another, more significant comment explains the purpose of the new temple's surrounding wall: "to make a separation between the holy and the common" (42:20e).

¹² Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 177-179.

¹³ Within the original vision accounts, YHWH speaks in the following verses: 2:3-8; 3:1, 3b-d, 4-11, 8:5b, 6, 9, 12-13, 15, 17-18; 9:1bc, 5b-6d, 7, 9-10; 10:2c-e, 37:3b, 4-6, 11-14*. 43:7-10.

¹⁴ We have already noticed that narrator comments are rare. Within the original vision accounts, the prophet-narrator utters direct speech in 9:8f; 37:3d.

2:8a; 3:10d; “speak my words” 2:7a; 3:4a). In 8-11*, it is from YHWH’s point of view that the readers hear what the people of Jerusalem say (8:12; 9:9; cf. 37:11); this includes an evaluation of the saying as insulting and “abominable.”

The dialogue in 9:8-10 is an interesting example in this regard, as there a change of point of view takes place. In the prophet’s outburst (9:8) he says what is happening from his point of view: total destruction through the outpouring of God’s wrath. YHWH’s answer (9:9-10) at first seems not really connected to the question; but from the perspective of point of view we see that YHWH describes the same scene – but from *his* point of view: after repeating that Israel is guilty and that he will have no pity, he states “Their way I give upon their heads” (9:10). Hence what *the prophet* sees as a destructive act *of God*, YHWH considers as the just consequence of *Israel’s* conduct.

The second technique by which YHWH’s ideological point of view is made to prevail consists in having YHWH determining the prophet-narrator’s point of view on the spatial and psychological as well as on the ideological plane. Despite his function as camera eye, “the narrator, strictly speaking, is not in charge of his narrative.”¹⁵ This occurs in particular in both temple visions (8-11*; 40-43*) and in 37:1-2. The prophet is not just left to explore the temple area by himself but he is always brought, either by YHWH himself or by a divinely commissioned figure, to a precise location (for example, in 8:3 the entrance of the outer north gate) and directed in his observations by his guide’s comments (for example, “lift up your eyes towards north” 8:5b) or movements (for example “He went into the gate... and measured the threshold” 40:6ad). The presence of a guide guarantees that the scenes witnessed by the prophet-narrator are never his own random impressions but that he narrates

¹⁵ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 135 in reference to the book of Ezekiel in general. Renz concludes aptly, “So even though Ezekiel is the narrator, the text he is narrating seems to be Yahweh’s” (p. 136).

exactly and only what YHWH wants him to. In addition, YHWH determines, by means of verbal communication, how to judge what has been observed: for example, “abominations” (8:6dg, 9c, 13c, 15d, 17c; 43:8d); “The guilt ... is very, very great” (9:9b); “These bones, the whole House of Israel are they” (37:11b_P); “[This is] the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet” (43:7b). Again, since the prophet-narrator is sparing with his own comments,¹⁶ the ideological point of view perceived by the reader is that of YHWH.

7.1.1.3 Summary

To sum up, it can be argued that in the original vision accounts there is a non-concurrence between point of view on the psychological plane and on the ideological plane.¹⁷ This leads to the exceptional situation that a character (YHWH) is in a more dominant position than the narrator.¹⁸ Extending Adele Berlin’s initially quoted comparison of point of view with a camera eye,¹⁹ it might be stated that, whilst the camera eye corresponds to the prophet-narrator, YHWH takes the role of the *camera man* who determines *what* is filmed and *how* it is portrayed. Since in the logic of a biblical narrative God’s point of view is true by definition,²⁰ the visions thereby demand acceptance from the audience as unailing and truthful. In other words, “It is Yahweh’s assessment of the situation which the readers are urged to share, not the assessment given by any mere human being.”²¹

¹⁶ Also here, there are rare exceptions; for example it is a judgement from the narrator’s ideological point of view when he describes the pictures on the wall of the hidden room as “loathsome” (8:10c). This of course coincides with YHWH’s ideological point of view.

¹⁷ Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 33f. refers that Uspensky allowed for, and provided various examples of, non-concurrence of point of view on different planes. Unfortunately, Yamasaki discusses only the case of irony (ibid., 184f.).

¹⁸ ibid., 180 asserts that in biblical narrative the ideological point of view of the narrator will always dominate over those of the characters. It seems to me that Ezekiel is a clear exception to this rule.

¹⁹ Berlin, *Poetics*, 44f.

²⁰ Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 24f; Olson, “Literary and Rhetorical Criticism,” 23 (point 3).

²¹ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 137.

7.1.2 The Portrayal of the Main Characters

The three essential characters in all original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*) are: YHWH, the prophet-narrator, and the collective figure of the House of Israel.²² Biblical characters can be portrayed in many ways;²³ in this case they are described by their own actions or words and/or by the way another character (usually YHWH) talks to/about them.

7.1.2.1 The Characterization of YHWH

In Ezekiel, the character of God is frequently called “Lord YHWH” (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה), perhaps to underline his majesty and authority.²⁴ In other instances the name יהוה is used.²⁵ At times, for example in Ezek 8, YHWH is only referred to by third-person singular verbal forms (“he brought me”; “he said”) and his identity has to be inferred.

As will become more and more apparent during this part of the thesis, the main character in the book of Ezekiel is not the prophet-narrator, but YHWH.²⁶ We have already seen that, on the ideological plane, the vision accounts present YHWH’s point of view. It is significant that YHWH is either the only speaker (in 2:3-3:15*) or has by far the highest share of direct speech (in the other three accounts). This underlines yet again that the central figure is YHWH as it entails at least four consequences. Firstly, no room is left for verbal communication between other characters; all talking either is done by YHWH or it is directed to him. In this way, YHWH becomes the central point of all relationships. Secondly, even though YHWH speaks to the prophet face to face, this is far from being a dialogue among

²² Other actors, such as the seven destroyers in Ezek 9 or the man with the measuring rod in Ezek 40-43, are particular to one vision only. These mediating figures will be discussed in Chap. 9.

²³ On the ways of characterization in biblical narrative, see Berlin, *Poetics*, 33-42.

²⁴ Otto Eissfeldt, “אֲדֹנָי ‘adhôn,” in *TDOT*, Revised ed., vol. 1, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 71. On occurrences and discussion of אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה and יהוה in Ezekiel, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1250-1258.

²⁵ The fact that YHWH is, in the book of Ezekiel, the only deity called by name may indicate an essentially monotheistic view (Hossfeld, “Das Buch Ezechiel,” 594).

²⁶ Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 4, 11.

equals.²⁷ In truth, more often than not there is no dialogue at all because the prophet remains mute (37:3 is what comes closest to a real conversation). Thirdly, much of YHWH's talk consists of commands, whose silent execution is simply presupposed; thus, divine speech has considerable influence on the plot of the story.²⁸ Finally, through the direct speech the reader is allowed some insight into YHWH's state of mind as it changes from vision to vision. YHWH is therefore the most fully outlined character because his thoughts and opinions are disclosed to the reader to a greater extent than the inner life of any other character.

In the call narrative YHWH presents himself emphatically in his very first sentence as the one who is sending a prophet to the “rebels” (שׁוֹלְמֵהוּ אֲנִי אוֹתָהֶם) (2:3b), and secondly as the one against whom Israel has been rebelling for a long time (מְרִדוֹתֶיךָ) (2:3cd). Paradoxically, despite knowing that “they will not listen” (3:7ab), YHWH repeatedly tells the prophet to “speak my words to them” (2:7a; 3:4a) and thus appears eager still to communicate with the “house of rebellion.”

In the temple vision of Ezek 8-11* YHWH talks only about Israel's “abominations” until verse 8:18, where he voices his anger and resolution not to relent. Now, in turn, “I will not listen to them” (8:18e). It has already been mentioned²⁹ that the massacre in the city, from YHWH's point of view, is nothing more than to “give their way upon their heads” (9:10c). The Glory of YHWH is described as a “cloud” and as “brightness” (10:4bc).

The two visions of restoration are less expressive about YHWH's inner life. In 37:1-14*, through the rhetorical question in 37:3b and the literal fulfilment of the

²⁷ For Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 68, 222, the reason for the distance between Ezekiel and YHWH (in comparison to Jeremiah) is the physical remoteness of his exilic addressees from Jerusalem, which made them perceive YHWH as distant. I am not convinced that this explanation does justice to a book that proclaims YHWH's abandonment of the temple and addresses promises of restoration exclusively to the exilic community.

²⁸ Observed also by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 36*f; and Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 346.

²⁹ See above, Section 7.2.1.2.

promise to the bones (vv. 7-10*), it is made clear that YHWH is absolutely in control of the situation. The announcement of what YHWH will do for dead-bones/Israel shows, as a minimum, his determination to make the impossible possible.

In the second temple vision (40:1-43:10*), YHWH appears only in 40:1 and in 43:1-10* when he takes up residence in the new temple. The Glory is here described as issuing acoustic effects as well as radiance (43:2bc). In YHWH's speech, YHWH characterises himself as a king ("place of my throne"/ "place for the soles of my feet" 43:7b).³⁰ The reader might overhear a degree of satisfied relief of the king-returned-home in the repeated phrase "I will reside among the children of Israel forever" (43:7c, 9b). Through the description of the temple and the recurrence of "my holy name" (43:7d, 8c) YHWH is unambiguously characterized as holy.³¹

7.1.2.2 The Characterization of the House of Israel

There are several terms by which the prophet's fellow nationals are called. The most frequent is "House of Israel" (בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל).³² Within the call narrative, the people are nicknamed the "house of rebellion" (בֵּית מְרִי).³³ It is not always clear if this encompasses both the inhabitants of Judah and the (first group of) deportees, or merely one of the two. There seems to be a tendency, especially after 587, to consider the House of Israel as identical with the *golah*,³⁴ since the alternative term "the exiles" (הַגּוֹלָה) is used only in 1:1; 3:11b, 15a; 11:24b, 25a.

³⁰ In the second temple vision, YHWH is already characterised as king by the fact that he obviously has "built" the temple, as this was a task assigned to kings in the ancient Near East.

³¹ For example Wells, *God's Holy People*, 167f. sees a "firm association" in Ezekiel between YHWH's name and the root קדש ("God's very name is holiness.").

³² בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל occurs 83 times in the book of Ezekiel (147 in the OT). On the nomenclature for Israel in Ezekiel, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1258-1261.

³³ בֵּית מְרִי: 2:5c, 6g, 7d, 8c; 3:9d. The term recurs in 12:2-3 and in the redactional vision accounts, 3:26-27; 44:6.

³⁴ In 2:3-3:15*, the terms "House of Israel" and "the exiles" (3:4 // 3:11) can be intended as either distinct or synonymous. In 8-11*, "House of Israel" seems to refer to the population who remained in the land after 597 as they are the ones committing "abominations" in the temple precinct, distinct from the exiles who are the prophet's addressees in 8:1; 11:25. However, in 11:15, "your fellow exiles" and "the whole House of Israel" seem to mean one and the same group of persons. In 37:1-

The exiles/Israelites never come to speak for themselves; they are only indirectly quoted by YHWH (8:12d-f; 9:9e-g; 37:11c-f). Even their deeds are either narrated by YHWH (2:3; 8:17; 43:8) or described by the prophet-narrator (8:10-11, 14, 16). As a result, the House of Israel remains an object, rather than a subject, in the accounts. In particular, they are objects of YHWH's actions (9:10; 37:12, 14) and addressees of his words ("you shall say/speak to them" 2:4c, 7a; 3:1f, 4d, 11cd; 37:12b; cf. 40:4gh; 43:10a). They also function, implicitly and explicitly, as in-text addressees of the prophet-narrator (11:25).³⁵

In the first two vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*), the House of Israel is characterized entirely negatively: they are "rebellious" (מרד 2:3c, 7d), "not willing to listen" (לֹשְׁמַעַי אֵינָם אֲבִימָה 3:7b), and have "a hard forehead and a stubborn heart" (חֲזָקִי-מִצַּח וְקָשִׁי-לֵב 3:7c). "Their evil character is hereditary, ingrained, and therefore hopeless."³⁶ This is why they "commit abominations" (עֲשֵׂה תוֹעֲבוֹת 8:6de, 9cd, 13cd, 17cd) and "fill the land with violence/bloodshed" (מָלֵא אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַמָּס/דְּמִים 8:17e; 9:9c). In response, YHWH has the entire population killed (נָכַח 9:5c, 7f, 8a).

This corresponds to the situation of death depicted in 37:1-14* where the House of Israel is pictured as a multitude of "very dry bones" (vv. 2 and 11); however, they will return home (12f, 14c), receive YHWH's spirit (14a, cf. 11:19b), and "live" (וְחָיִיתֶם 14b). In the concluding speech of the second temple vision (43:7-10) this new life is juxtaposed with the old: past-tense sentence constructions speak of "their whoring" (בְּזָנוּתָם 43:7d; cf. 23:27), that they "committed

14* and 40:1-43:10*, the House of Israel is the prophet's addressee; possibly here too they are identical with the exiles. Exiles and House of Israel seem to be distinguished only with regard to the first deportation in 598/7 and not, or much less, after 587. In later layers of Ezek 40-48, the House of Israel becomes almost an idealised entity, uniting all twelve tribes as in the time of David and Solomon. According to Rom-Shiloni, "Voice of the Exiles," 1-45, the book of Ezekiel identifies the exiles throughout with the House of Israel. Her focus is, however, more on the disputation words than on the vision accounts.

³⁵ This is to be distinguished from the readership of the book (see 7.1 note 2; and Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 137-139).

³⁶ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 75. Likewise, from the perspective of the book as a whole, Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 174-189; Sedlmeier, "Transformationen," 205-207.

abominations” (עֲשֵׂה תוֹעֲבוֹת 43:8cd) and “defiled my holy name” (טמא pi. 43:8c).³⁷ As for the present or future, the same verb טמא appears in negative form: “they shall no more defile my holy name” (43:7d), but “put far away their idolatry” (רחק 43:9a) and “be ashamed” (כלם 43:10b).³⁸ It is noteworthy that while the punishment is considered as a consequence of their behaviour, the House of Israel has no causal involvement in the accomplishment of their restoration;³⁹ it remains again, and especially here, the object of YHWH’s dealings.

7.1.2.3 The Characterization of the Prophet

Throughout the book, the figure of the prophet is also the first-person narrator. The narratives are set up as though the reader was “listening” directly to his report of the event. However, the persona of the prophet-narrator is not a “full-fledged character”⁴⁰ as his personal views and feelings are never expressed.⁴¹ The character Ezekiel is the “type” of *the prophet*, an instrument of communication from YHWH to the House of Israel. Fittingly, he is not even called by his name but simply בְּן־אָדָם “son of man”: human being.⁴²

³⁷ The expression “to defile my holy name” (טמא שם קדושי) occurs only in 43:7d, 8c. Elsewhere in Ezekiel, people defile (טמא) themselves, or others, or the temple, or the land (in 20:26, YHWH defiles Israel!). The verb normally employed with “holy name” is הלל: Ezek 20:39; 36:20, 21, 22; 39:7; 44:7. On the distinctive use of טמא and הלל in Ezekiel, see the study by Tova Ganzel, “The Defilement and Desecration of the Temple in Ezekiel,” *Bib* 89 (2008): 369-379. On the use of טמא in Ezekiel and the idea of ritual and ethical impurity, see Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 147-160.

³⁸ The verb כלם “to be ashamed” recurs six times in Ezekiel: 16:27, 54, 61; 36:32; 43:10b, 11a; when referring to Israel, it is always the result of a divine act of restoration. On this topic, see Chap. 8.1.3.3.

³⁹ This depends partly on the interpretation of עֲתָה יִרְחֶקוּ in v. 9a as x-yiqtol (future), and not as jussive. Ludwig, “Ezekiel 43:9,” 67-78, especially 73-76. The topic of unconditional renewal will be discussed more in depth in Chap. 8.1.

⁴⁰ On the distinction between *full-fledged characters*, *types*, and *agents* in biblical narrative, see Berlin, *Poetics*, 23-33. A terminological alternative would be to define Ezekiel as a *flat*, as opposed to a *round*, character.

⁴¹ On the prophet’s “veiled” personality, see Walther Zimmerli, “Das verhüllte Gesicht des Propheten Ezechiel,” in *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, TB 51 (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1974), 138-147. Moreover, Konkel, “Prophet ohne Eigenschaften,” 224f. underlines that the little biographical information – the prophet’s name, his father’s name, his priestly background – is not revealed by the narrator but by an editor (1:3a).

⁴² On this appellative, see e.g. Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*, 72-74. Additionally, Patton, “Priest, Prophet, and Exile,” 76 stresses the contrast between the deuteronomistic prophetic title אִישׁ אֶלֹהִים and Ezekiel’s humbler epithet בְּן־אָדָם. She also sees the literary figure of Ezekiel as “the

As a mere instrument, he is not a protagonist in the sense of a proactive, energetic hero. More than anything else, the visions *happen* to him. His most distinguished traits are passivity and obedience. For example in 2:3-3:15*, the actions that the prophet-narrator accomplishes portray him as either the passive recipient of the divine message (ראה 2:9a; שמע 3:12b) or responding to commands: eating the scroll (פתח 3:2a, אכל 3:3e; cf. 2:8; 3:1-3), going to the exiles (הלך 3:14c, בוא 3:15a; cf. 3:1e, 4bc, 11ab).⁴³ Indeed, when YHWH addresses him, he does so mainly in commands.⁴⁴ No resistance is mentioned, despite the fact that an objection is a common, even expected, feature in call narratives.⁴⁵ The newly commissioned prophet does not rise to speak at all; in all four original vision accounts together, he has a total of two sentences to say (9:8f; 37:3d). His passivity and total dependence on YHWH's guidance and commands is further expressed in the motif of translocation by a divine force (8:3cd; 11:24ab; 37:1bc; 40:1c; 43:5ab): the vision descends on the prophet and carries him away, taking complete control over him.⁴⁶ Finally, in the long tour of Chapters 40-42* the prophet-narrator is not even the grammatical subject of a sentence, saying "he [the man] led me," not "I followed";

quintessential prophet" (ibid.), although she then goes on to focus on his role as a priest.

Kathleen Rochester suggests that addressing the prophet impersonally as בן־אדם "may function as an identification of Ezekiel with the exiles who may feel like a no-name people." Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 38.

⁴³ However, while the prophet obediently eats the scroll, he does not immediately obey the command to speak (דבר 2:7a; 3:1f, 4d, 11c; אמר 2:4c; 3:11d). On the contrary, he remains stunned in his house for seven days (3:15c). "The contrast between the stunned silence of the prophet and his commission, so full of orders to speak, is remarkable." Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 74.

⁴⁴ Most verbal forms directed to the prophet are imperatives, negated imperatives, or *w^eqatal* forms with an imperative meaning: YHWH commands to *hear* his words (שמע 2:8a; 3:6a, 10d; cf. 3:10b₂), to *go* (הלך 3:1e, 4b, 11a; בוא 3:4c, 11b) and to *speak* to the Israelites (דבר 2:7a; 3:1f, 4d, 11c; אמר 2:4c; 3:11d); he requires the prophet to be fearless (ירא 2:6abe; 3:9b; חתה 2:6f; 3:9c in negated imperatives); and to eat the scroll (אכל 2:8e; 3:[1b₂,] 1d, 3b; פצה 2:8d; מלא 3:3c).

⁴⁵ Compare the call narratives of Moses (Ex 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13), Gideon (Judg 6:15), and Jeremiah (Jer 1:6).

Some authors find a tacit resistance behind the fact that YHWH repeats the command to eat the scroll three times (2:8; 3:1, 3) and behind Ezekiel's reaction of bitterness and shock (3:14-15); e.g. Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 11f; Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, "Ezekiel: A Compromised Prophet in Reduced Circumstances," in *Constructs of Prophecy in the Former and Latter Prophets and Other Texts*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Martti Nissinen, SBLANEM 4 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 179f. For a contrary position, see Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 193-199.

⁴⁶ Tiemeyer, "Compromised Prophet," 178f. She gives more examples of the prophet not being in control of himself but many are from what are here considered redactional layers or from texts other than the vision accounts.

“he measured,” not “I saw him measuring” or the like.⁴⁷ Only once, after the return of the Glory, the prophet-narrator is the grammatical subject, stating “I heard” (שמעתי 43:6a); this again expresses a receptive rather than an active attitude. In sum, “The overall effect is to portray Ezekiel as an automaton, an individual who has no human personality but is totally under the control of the divine will.”⁴⁸

In terms of the prophet-narrator’s passivity, the vision of the bones seems, at first sight, to be an exception because of the greater involvement of the prophet in the visionary events: after all, it is through his prophesying that the bones are restored to life (37:7-10*⁴⁹). While this is true it nevertheless does not constitute anything fundamentally different. Even in this case, the prophet only does as he is told. The narration has YHWH pronounce the full oracle (37:4d-6g); that the prophet repeats it is narrated *en passant* in one infinitive (יִסְמְעֵנִי 37:7c).⁵⁰

Through his characteristic obedience, the prophet-narrator stands in stark contrast to the House of Israel. This is emphasised in particular in the call narrative because the situation requiring a prophet is precisely Israel’s generation-long “rebelliousness” (2:3) while the prophet-narrator is compliant to YHWH’s words;⁵¹

⁴⁷ The prophet-narrator’s passivity is still more underlined by the continuous activity of the man with the “appearance like the appearance of bronze” (40:3c) who is busy leading, measuring, and moving around. Twice the man speaks to Ezekiel (אמר 40:4a; 41:4c), three times he enters a specific place or climbs up stairs (בוא 40:6a; 41:3a עלה 40:6c), nine times he leads the prophet to another part of the temple (בוא *hiph.* 40:17a, 28a, 32a, 35a, 48a; 41:1a; הלך *hiph.* 40:24a; 43:1a; יצא *hiph.* 42:15b), and twenty-one times he measures an element of the building (מדד 40:5c, 6d, 8, 11a, 13a, 19a, 20c, 23b, 24c, 27b, 28b, 32b, 35b, 47a, 48b; 41:1b, 2c, 3b, 4a; 42:15ad).

⁴⁸ Wilson, “Prophecy in Crisis,” 126. Similarly, Hossfeld, “Das Buch Ezechiel,” 593 states, “Obwohl das ganze Buch Selbstbericht ist, bleibt der Prophet hinter der alles beherrschenden JHWH-Rede verborgen.”

⁴⁹ From this, Henry McKeating argues, “The vision of the valley of dry bones is a clear indication either of how the prophet views himself and his role in the miraculous restoration of his battered people, or of how he is viewed by those who shaped the traditions about him. He is not an observer, or a commentator – or at least, if he is, he is also something more. He is a player, an activist, a key participant in affairs.” H. McKeating, “Ezekiel the ‘Prophet Like Moses’?,” *JSOT* 61 (1994): 106. I would consider this a little exaggerated.

⁵⁰ This is emphasised also, though with regard to v. 9, by Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 192.

⁵¹ Underlined e.g. by Odell, “You Are What You Eat,” 242; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 140; Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 209-211; Matthijs J. de Jong, “Ezekiel as a Literary Figure and the Quest for the Historical Prophet,” in *The Book of Ezekiel and its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge and Johannes Tromp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 6.

likewise, in Ezek 8 the prophet-narrator is the only person to recognize the presence of YHWH.

In the temple visions (8-11*; 40-43*), the principal role of the prophet is that of a witness.⁵² Accordingly, he is asked to *come*, *see*, and *hear*, so as to afterward refer YHWH's deeds to the exiled House of Israel (40:4g₁; 43:10a; cf. 11:25).⁵³ This role of witness and messenger is first, in 8-11*, pertaining to the reasons, the mercilessness, and the inexorability of YHWH's judgement, and then, in 40-43*, to the new ideal order which YHWH is creating. Also in 37:1-14*, the prophet holds a similar role as he witnesses the (symbolic) resurrection of the bones before he is sent to announce the resurrection to the exiles.

While the prophet-narrator has the classic prophetic task to be the messenger of the divine word to the people, he is not permitted to be an advocate for the people before God. This becomes clear in 9:8 when he suddenly breaks his deferential silence: "and I cried out, and I said ..."⁵⁴ In this moment the visionary witness assumes the role of the prophet interceding on behalf of his people.⁵⁵ Yet the answer he receives (9:9-10) makes it clear that the time for intercession is past and that pleading for mercy is not intended to be part of his mission. He is to address the people, not YHWH. "Instead of being a person who promotes communication between God and the people, Ezekiel is thus being reduced to a one-sided sign-post that points to God."⁵⁶ In sum, "Ezekiel acts the part of an obedient, unquestioning,

⁵² Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 13f. Since she includes the secondary verse 43:11 into her analysis, Stevenson also stresses the role of the prophet as writer.

⁵³ בוא – imperative: 8:9b; first person: 8:10a; ראה – divine speech: 8:6bg, 12b, 13c, 15bd, 17b; 40:4bh; first person: 8:10b (alternatively, in 8:5bc the expression *וַשֹּׂא עֵינַיִם*, to lift up one's eyes, is used); שמע – 40:4c; first person: 43:6a; שים לִבְךָ – 40:4d; נגד – 40:4g₁; 43:10a.

⁵⁴ This is also the only occasion within the original version of chaps 8-11* that the narrator is active enough to be the subject of three subsequent *wayyiqtol* forms: ... וַאֲזַעַק וְאֶמַּר. On the special nature of 9:8-10, refer back to Chap. 3.3 and to Section 7.1.1.

⁵⁵ Contrarily, Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 103 maintains that the outcry is an expression "of shock, not of protest" and no attempt to intercede.

⁵⁶ Tiemeyer, "Compromised Prophet," 190. See pp. 180-190 on prophetic intercession in general and specifically in Jeremia and Ezekiel. She sees this "redefinition" of the prophetic role very critically.

servant messenger”;⁵⁷ “er selbst aber gewinnt als eigenständige Figur durch das gesamte Buch hindurch keine Kontur.”⁵⁸

7.1.2.4 Summary

The above considerations regarding the portrayal of the characters indicate that, although the original vision accounts are written from the perspective of the prophet-narrator, their actual main character is YHWH.⁵⁹ YHWH is the most dominant figure and establishes the ideological point of view. The other characters are presented in their position towards him (rebellious – obedient) and are influenced by him. In all vision accounts YHWH is the figure whose actions and commands determine the unfolding of the story. They all tell of an initiative YHWH takes in order to respond to a specific situation.⁶⁰ For example, in the call narrative, which also functions as the exposition of the problem, YHWH responds to the enduring disobedience of the House of Israel by sending a prophet. In contrast, Israel is an object without a voice of its own, and the prophet-narrator is portrayed “generally as on the receiving end of communication” and “merely a medium.”⁶¹

7.1.3 Empathy, Antipathy, and the Audience

7.1.3.1 The Audience

In order to speak about empathy and rhetoric, we need first to ask whether it is possible to know anything about the historical audience of the original vision accounts. The identity of the in-text addressees is clearly indicated by the exilic setting of all four vision accounts. “And I came *to the exiles* (אֶל-הַגִּלְגָּלִים) at Tel-Abib”

⁵⁷ Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 66.

⁵⁸ Konkel, “Prophet ohne Eigenschaften,” 234.

⁵⁹ So also de Jong, “Ezekiel as a Literary Figure,” 6. For de Jong, this means that the figure of the prophet is “a literary-theological construct” (p. 14). This is true but it says essentially nothing – not even in a negative sense – about the first author of the book, or about the book’s redactional process.

⁶⁰ Similarly already Zimmerli, “Botschaft,” 124.

⁶¹ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 135 and 136, respectively.

(3:15a); “I told *the exiles* (הַגִּלְגָּלִים) all the words of YHWH” (11:25a); “in the twenty-fifth year *of our exile* (לְגִלְגָּלֵינוּ)” (40:1a₁), and indirectly in 37:12f, 14c.

Given the exilic date of the texts,⁶² it seems safe to assume that these addressees represent the kind of real-world audience that the narratives historically presumed. Ezekiel’s vision accounts were directed in the first place to those deported to Babylonia ten years prior to Jerusalem’s destruction (and, after 587, perhaps to the second group of exiles as well); it is the attitude of this audience that these texts are designed to influence.⁶³

7.1.3.2 Empathize With Which Character?

The way characters are portrayed is usually designed to have a specific effect on the reader’s ability to empathize with one character and to feel antipathy toward another.⁶⁴ This is, of course, a significant rhetorical tool. By identifying with a character, the reader will be likely to also accept that character’s ideological point of view.⁶⁵

As regards the House of Israel, this dynamic works exactly the opposite way. Three of the four visions (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 40:1-43:10*)⁶⁶ categorically reject all that is represented of Israel’s actions, attitudes, and sayings. In this way, the texts criticize the people and generate antipathy towards them. In any event, the fact that the House of Israel is a collective and much generalized character, makes it more difficult to empathize with it.

⁶² Refer back to Chap. 6.2.

⁶³ On the objective and subjective factors of the rhetorical situation, see Fox, “Rhetoric,” 5f; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 39-55.

⁶⁴ “While reading, readers enter into a special relationship with the narration and the actants, approaching them in ways that are not wholly different from the ways that they look at people in the ‘real’ or ‘extra-literary’ world.” Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 26.

⁶⁵ Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 20, cf. 154, 183.

⁶⁶ Ezek 37:1-14* concedes that Israel is correct in comparing themselves with dead bones (11d); the vision only contradicts their deduction that there is no hope for them (11e).

By contrast, the persona of YHWH is the only full-fledged character and also the most dominant figure in all four vision accounts. However, while his ideological point of view is meant to be accepted by the reader, it is hard to empathize with this character, precisely because he is God – but also because his point of view is probably very remote from that of the audience. The cognizance of YHWH’s inner life may generate empathy, or at least understanding, to some extent; however, YHWH’s superiority and power, along with his cruelty and lack of positive emotions, tend to produce a distant and authoritarian image of God. The reader cannot directly identify with YHWH.

Despite his non-personality, the prophet-narrator still is the figure with whom the reader can empathize most easily. Firstly because, in a narrative with a first-person narrator, the readers’ empathy most naturally will lie with the narrator since they experience the story from his perspective.⁶⁷ Secondly, despite the distancing effect owing to his lack of emotions and individuality,⁶⁸ the prophet-narrator is one of the people, i.e. an accessible, nearby character. At the same time he is “a prescriptive paradigm of obedience,”⁶⁹ a positive contrast-figure to the House of Israel: they don’t listen, he does; they commit abominations and receive punishment for it, he “is reserved from this punishment of sin. ... he has committed no sin.”⁷⁰

As we have seen, the prophet-narrator is entirely dominated by YHWH and is the instrument for conveying YHWH’s position. On a meta-narrative level, the character of the prophet is moreover an instrument of communication to the reader. It is part of the rhetorical technique that, once the readers empathize and identify with

⁶⁷ Yamasaki, *Watching a Biblical Narrative*, 154.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 158. Yamasaki speaks there of a character, not of the narrator; but it seems reasonable to infer that if “the audience is never made privy to the person’s thoughts, feelings, or motives” even the narrator “could remain very much a mystery to the audience.”

⁶⁹ Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 211 (cf. 201-212); see also de Jong, “Ezekiel as a Literary Figure,” 5f.

⁷⁰ Patton, “Priest, Prophet, and Exile,” 82. (81-84). Patton sees this in terms of hierarchy: being morally righteous and ritually pure, and having access to God’s presence, the figure of Ezekiel becomes the figure of an ideal political and religious leader.

the prophet-narrator, they are eventually led, together with him, to consent to YHWH's point of view.⁷¹

7.1.4 The Intended Reaction of the Audience (Rhetoric)

What has been said so far leads directly to the question of how each narrative aims to influence the audience towards a desired reaction. This means taking the narrative-critical analysis another step further towards rhetorical criticism.⁷²

7.1.4.1 "Eat What I Give You": The Call Narrative

As the story begins to unfold with the prophet's commission (2:3-3:15*), we have noticed that he is distinguished from his fellow nationals by his listening to YHWH's words, and by his (literally) taking them in, before he is sent to proclaim them. In a general sense, 2:3-3:15* is, like any prophetic call narrative, an appeal to the audience to acknowledge the prophetic message as having its origin in God.

More specifically, this text prompts the reader to take a position, with the prophet-narrator, of "non-rebelliousness" instead of remaining obstinate like Israel, the "house of rebellion." Just as the prophet is commanded to "eat what I give you" (2:8ef) even before he actually sees the object in question, the readers are asked to accept the message to be unfolded in the following chapters before actually knowing what will be presented to them.⁷³

⁷¹ Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* 56f; on a general note, Amsler, "Parole visionnaire," 362. Perhaps there is some point of contact to Tuell's idea that the text of Ezekiel's writings served as a "medium" of YHWH's presence in exile. Tuell, "Ezekiel 40-42 as Verbal Icon," 662-664; "Divine Presence and Absence in Ezekiel's Prophecy," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, SBLSymS 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 109-114.

⁷² "Rhetorical" is meant here in the sense of "the focus on literary works as means of communication or, more likely, of persuasion." Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 6 (see 1-11); likewise Fox, "Rhetoric," 1-4.

⁷³ Albeit in a different context (arguing for the book-character of the Ezekiel narrative), Renz writes with a similar expression, "As Ezekiel received the scroll and ate it (2:9-3:3), so the reader is expected to take the book and 'stomach' it." Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 18.

On the other hand, readers acquainted with the pre-exilic prophetic writings, will expect not only more YHWH-words to be delivered but also further action to be taken by YHWH. Even though not yet openly announced, it has become evident that YHWH is not going to endure the status quo any longer. Because repentance is not a realistic option, punishment is expected to be imminent: lamentation, mourning and woe, the full measure, written all over on both sides (2:10) – it will be a message hard to digest.

7.1.4.2 Accept the Inevitable: The First Temple Vision

In the account of the first temple vision (8-11*) YHWH lets the prophet-narrator see Jerusalem's present and its imminent future, respectively as reason for, and as consequence of, YHWH's anger.⁷⁴ Although the vision is dated some years prior to the actual event of Jerusalem's destruction (8:1),⁷⁵ at no point in Ezek 8-11* is the judgement pronounced in conditional terms ("if you don't repent, then..."), but as a reality that is inescapably certain to arrive.⁷⁶ Therefore, the effect the narrative aims to provoke is not repentance.⁷⁷ Rather, the graphic description of the idolatric practices occurring within the temple area – underscored by the four-fold repeated question "Have you seen, son of man?"⁷⁸ – suggests that the intention is to justify the punishment. While the disaster is inescapable, it is yet to be accepted as a deserved consequence of turning one's back on YHWH and his commands. "The audience is ... to confirm a judgement already made, that is they are asked to identify with the decision of the judge. They have to decide whether it is they who are just or

⁷⁴ "Judgement cannot be interpreted here in a harmless way or as an unlucky misfortune, which could be understood with a 'who knows whence it comes?' It is the power which stems from the place of the presence of the Holy One. It is being forsaken by the presence of God." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1, 253. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 236.

⁷⁵ Refer to Chap. 6.2.2.

⁷⁶ Fishbane, "Sin and Judgment," 135f.

⁷⁷ On this topic, see Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 47-49.

⁷⁸ This question is for Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, 59, "ein Ausdruck der Empörung über die 'Greuel,' die in Jerusalem zu sehen sind. Der Prophet und vor allem *der Leser* hegt auf Grund dieser viermaligen Frage die Erwartung einer Reaktion Jahwes auf die geschilderten Ungeheuerlichkeiten" (his italics).

Yahweh.”⁷⁹ Hence the desired reaction is to acknowledge YHWH’s actions in the tragedy and to unreservedly admit his justice notwithstanding the cruelty of the punishment.

Yet the first addressee of Ezek 8-11* was not in Jerusalem. As stated at the beginning of this section, the original vision accounts were written primarily for the exilic community (see 8:1; 11:25). These people were not in immediate physical danger; for them, the judgement meant to be bereft of their hopes, which were still linked to the holy city and its temple: hopes of a swift return, illusions of prevailing against the Babylonians.⁸⁰ The vision urges them to accept that YHWH’s judgement is deserved (including that judgement which, as deportees, they too were suffering).⁸¹ In ultimate consequence, the exiles are even required to embrace the possibility of losing their identity as YHWH’s chosen people, yet without turning away from YHWH so as to seek better fortune elsewhere – but to bear the abandonment, anger, and punishment of YHWH. Undeniably, Ezek 8-11* is the most indigestive of Ezekiel’s visions.

7.1.4.3 “And They Will Live”: The Vision of the Dry Bones

In 37:1-14*, the readers are invited, together with the prophet-narrator, to review their own situation as exiles and, again, to embrace an unexpected, radical change that YHWH will bring about. The vision shows the appalling scenario of a plain filled with dried, long-dead bones. Given their own saying quoted in v. 11, the exiles would not have objected to being associated with those bones. The element of surprise is, rather, that YHWH, effortlessly and by his word alone, transforms those symbols of death into a living “army” (v. 10). Since “there was no rational basis for

⁷⁹ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 57. Similar also Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 109f. This thrust might be one major reason for the often observed lack of sympathy and compassion in Ezekiel.

⁸⁰ Fishbane, “Sin and Judgment,” 148.

⁸¹ Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 131.

hope”⁸² the author resorts to the rationality of the absurd. Once the readers have followed the plot of the vision so far, they are virtually obliged to acknowledge: if YHWH is able to breathe life into scattered sun-bleached bones, and if the exiles *are* “cut off” and dried bones, then, by logical inference, it is within YHWH’s power to restore them whenever he wishes.⁸³ The incredible event of resurrection becomes more credible through the fact that the prophet-narrator does not *predict* it but *witnesses* it – albeit in vision. The account finishes before the prophet’s actual announcement to the House of Israel. Hence the real-life readers know more than the character that represents them in the narrative: they know about the divine promise and are to expect its proclamation and thereby its realisation. The aim of 37:1-14 is to (re-)kindle hope for the exilic community in order to maintain their sense of identity and their confidence in YHWH.⁸⁴

7.1.4.4 “Never Again Defile My Holy Name”: The Second Temple Vision

The impact of the second temple vision (40:1-43:10*) on its exilic readership is particularly difficult to imagine; however, as already stated in Chapter 5.6, the mysterious new temple becomes more comprehensible when it is seen as a symbol for the new order established by YHWH.⁸⁵ It may be concluded that the intended reaction – once again – is the acceptance of the revealed plan. What is required here is not embracing one’s own collective death (as it was in 8-11*), but welcoming the

⁸² Fox, “Rhetoric,” 7.

⁸³ Refer to Chap. 4.3.3. Fox illustrates this aptly with the opposition of two syllogisms (ibid., 12.)

Israel:	God:
[Dry bones cannot come to life]	Dry bones <i>can</i> come to life (1-10)
Israel is dry bones (11b α)	Israel is dry bones (affirmed in 12a)
Therefore Israel cannot come to life (11b β)	Therefore Israel can come to life (12-14)

⁸⁴ So also ibid., 6f, 13.

⁸⁵ Niditch, “Ezekiel 40-48” compares Ezek 40-48 with Tibetan Buddhist Mandalas insofar as both sketch out an ideal picture of the cosmos. Highlighting the role of Ezek 40-48 in Jewish mystic traditions, Odell, *Ezekiel*, 529 (also 492, 494), suggests that the contemplation of the temple would lead the readers “directly to the contemplation, adoration, and service of the God of Israel.” Andrew Mein argues from a more sociological point of view that, during exile, the temple became a “symbol not only of divine favour, but also of the idea of nationhood, a common identity and common values.” Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 175.

inauguration of a new order that ensures a new life. By accepting it, the House of Israel will understand their guilt of the past (43:10) and will be able to act appropriately in the future. As in 37:1-14*, the narrative finishes abruptly and does not include the prophet's return and report to the House of Israel (40:4; 43:10); as a result, the *readers* have the divine message anticipated to them in a privileged way:⁸⁶ they know already while the in-text addressees do not yet. From this advantage point, the readers are invited to already prepare themselves for the time when the new temple will actually be proclaimed and the people of YHWH will be restored.⁸⁷

Moreover, the temple clearly has the function of protecting YHWH's name from being defiled ever again.⁸⁸ It may therefore be assumed that an exilic reader of 40:1-43:10* would feel compelled and encouraged to likewise avoid everything that may cause such defilement, for example to abstain from idolatric practices and to distinguish holy and profane spheres in life (whether spatial, temporal, or regarding actions or objects) – even if this could only be a preparation, not a condition, for the permanent dwelling of YHWH's Glory “among them forever.”

7.1.4.5 Summary

From this brief sketch it seems that all four original vision accounts basically demand the same attitude of their audience. Whether it is about harsh judgement or about the gift of new life, the mind-set, which the narratives wish to engender in their readers, is one of unconditional acceptance. This is no little request, as the visions

⁸⁶ Liss, “Describe the Temple,” 135 points out that the seemingly inaccessible temple can easily be entered by anyone, “simply by reading.”

⁸⁷ “... while not in a position to create a future for themselves, the readers are encouraged to expect Yahweh to create a future for them. Thus the book argues that its reader should dissociate themselves from their past and associate themselves with Ezekiel's portrayal of a new Israel. It argues that Yahweh is in control throughout. He brought about the judgement on Jerusalem and the nations and he will create a future for Israel back in Palestine.” Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 131; see also Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 252-255.

⁸⁸ So Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 159-161. Liss, “Describe the Temple,” 139f., 142f. goes as far as saying that the temple can fulfil this task only within literary fiction because its total holiness will only be preserved by being a house for YHWH alone, without “real” human interference.

run diametrically opposed to the expectations of their historical readers: first, while these still feel confident, they must lose their illusionary hope; then, when there is no illusion and no hope remaining, they are supposed to believe in a new, ideal future. Both judgement and restoration are guaranteed to take place because YHWH has so decreed, and because, in visions, his prophet-witness has seen it happen already.⁸⁹

On the level of reality, the author uses this constellation of YHWH, prophet-narrator, and people⁹⁰ as he ventures to explain the catastrophic events that engulf Judah as a consequence of the nation's relationship with YHWH. The way the author portrays YHWH in the vision accounts is a direct reflection of the image he has of God; in this sense the visions are eminently theological statements.⁹¹

7.2 *Developments in Selected Redactional Layers*

In order to follow how characters, point of view, and reader-orientation develop throughout the process of redaction, the focus shall now turn towards the two expansions that are sufficiently long to contain autonomous statements on these aspects: the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12, 14) and the vision of the river (47:1-12*). A first observation shows that, while the prophet-narrator is invariably present, the other two main characters – YHWH and the House of Israel – can be omitted or substituted. Finally, attention will be given to the redactional vision in 3:22-27.

⁸⁹ On the “fantastic” dimension of the vision accounts and its effect on the readers, see Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 13-17.

⁹⁰ “As critics, we try to ‘overhear’ the author presenting to his readership the narrative of a prophet who allows his audience to ‘overhear’ what Yahweh has to say to Jerusalem.” Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 14; see also pp. 19-22. More precisely we should perhaps say: ... what the *author* believes YHWH has to say.

⁹¹ “For it is not God whose voice the readers hear, but the book’s ‘God’ (God according to Ezekiel).” Scatolini Apòstolo, “Imagining Ezekiel,” 4. This is all the more true when considering that, as Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 80* observes, direct descriptions of YHWH’s attributes in adjectives or participles are rare.

7.2.1 More Awe: The Vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*)

The awe-inspiring redactional beginning of the book of Ezekiel (1:1-2:2*; 3:12, 14) features only two of the main characters: the prophet-narrator and YHWH, or more precisely: the appearance of the Glory of YHWH.⁹² Israel is not mentioned within the vision. However, the exiles are briefly referred to in the introductory verses (1:1b), which secure an exilic setting for the account as such: the vision is localized “by the river Chebar,” in Babylonia.

Hence the prophet-narrator is characterised up front as part of the exilic community. Apart from that, he is once again portrayed as the passive and overwhelmed spectator of the sight materializing in front of his eyes. Analogous to his role in the original visions, all that he does is: to see (ראה 1:1d, 4a, 15a, 27ab, 28d), to hear (שמע 1:24a, 28f; 2:2d; 3:12b), and, at the climax of the description, to fall down on his face (נפל 1:28e).

Given the static, painting-like quality of this vision,⁹³ it does not have an actual plot, as do the older vision accounts; in fact, also YHWH is not really *doing* much: it seems sufficient for him to *appear*. The accompanying creatures and effects take up the larger part of the narration (1:4-26a₂); only once the sight is satisfactorily described, does the prophet-narrator react (1:28e) and the divine voice begins to speak (1:28f-2:2e) – and at this point we enter the older call narrative (2:3-3:15*).

The only person in the vision of the Glory, with whom the reader can possibly identify, is the prophet-narrator, since the story is told from his (external) psychological point of view. What is more, he is the only human being among the monstrous creatures. That the strange apparition is ultimately the visible presence of YHWH – his קְבוֹד – is not clear until the very last verse of the description (1:28c);

⁹² The four living beings, though subjects in a grammatical sense, are not really characters but rather symbolic attributes of the קְבוֹד (see Chap. 9.2.1).

⁹³ Refer to Chap. 2.4.

thus, from the narrator's and from the readers' perspective, YHWH is only then really "on stage." Through his entourage and the heightened position, YHWH is characterised as even more distant, transcendent, and overpowering.⁹⁴

This vision is clearly designed to inspire a strong sense of awe in the audience. Contrary to the original vision accounts, 1:4-2:2* is a pure description; a particular point of view on the ideological plane is not evident. Yet as the readers identify with the prophet-narrator, they are supposed to let themselves be filled, like him, with fear and admiration and to mentally imitate the prophet-narrator's physical response of falling down in veneration. The emphasis on YHWH's authority and power, which was already present in the original writings, is in 1:1-2:2* raised to the maximum.⁹⁵

7.2.2 Higher Hopes: The Vision of the River (47:1-12)

In the vision of the healing river that transforms the desert of Judah into an earthly paradise (47:1-12*), only two characters appear: the prophet-narrator and the man with the measuring line. The same man was guiding the prophet-narrator earlier (40:5-43:1*). At his first emergence he was described as some kind of supernatural being, "like the appearance of bronze" (40:3c); clearly in the service of YHWH (40:4), yet distinct from God (40:4f; 43:6).⁹⁶ There is no indication that the persona of the man should be essentially different in the expansion of the river.⁹⁷ Thus, this vision account is the only one without YHWH's direct participation; YHWH has been replaced, as it were, by a delegate. Whilst 47:1-12* certainly describes the effects of YHWH's presence in terms of healing⁹⁸ and fertility for the land (and thus

⁹⁴ Wells, *God's Holy People*, 161f; Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 64.

⁹⁵ Refer back to Chap. 2.6.

⁹⁶ On the man, see below, Chap. 9.1.2.

⁹⁷ Although differences to 40:5-43:10* exist (see 5.3.3.1), these do not touch the general role of the guide.

⁹⁸ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 280 emphasises that YHWH is the standard subject of *רָפָא* in the OT.

indirectly for the people), the text does this without ever mentioning YHWH, or his Glory, or the people of Israel.

Especially vv. 1-7, before the second, and longer, speech of the man, are narrated from the prophet-narrator's point of view: on the external psychological plane as well as from an informational viewpoint. The readers follow the guide, so to speak, together with the prophet-narrator; with him they discover the trickle of water; they join prophet and guide on their way eastward, and watch the water grow to a river. At every point, the reader knows as much, or as little, as the prophet-narrator, whereas the man of course knows up front where he is going and what the water is all about.

From v. 8b onwards, the man's speech seemingly gives his point of view, as he explains the way and the function of the water. In truth, however, the guide speaks not his own words but, as a delegate, his knowledge and the explanation come from YHWH. Consequently, YHWH is even here, though indirectly, the character who determines both the vision and its explanation.

The vision of the healing river that issues from the sanctuary spells out for the reader that the newly-installed order finds its expression not only in architectonic and cultic terms, but that the renewed presence of YHWH amidst his people will have consequences of blessing for the entire land. While following the man along the river, the reader is to learn just how fast these blessings will grow,⁹⁹ and how they produce healing and provide even for basic human needs like food. *Everything* will be good once YHWH reigns again in Israel. It is this hope, potentiated in comparison to the original 40:1-43:10*, that 47:1-12* encourages in its readers. Once more, this

⁹⁹ As Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1199 accurately observes, immediately at the sanctuary, there is only a small source of water; the little streamlet then grows extraordinarily fast into profuse abundance "by which the land outside, even down to the place of accursed death, is blessed and restored." Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 515. While YHWH's promised blessings may commence apparently small, they will soon reveal their effective power.

hope is free of charge, lacking any appeal for action but passively expecting its realization from YHWH.

7.2.3 Less Prophet: The Redactional Vision Account (3:22-27)

The prophet-narrator's lack of initiative and dependence of YHWH is taken to extremes in the redactional compiled account in 3:22-27. The first part (3:22a-24c) portrays him once again as the obedient, but still active, servant of YHWH: he is asked to get up (קום 22c) and go out into the valley (אל-הַבְּקִיעָה 22d), and this is precisely what he does (23ab). As promised (22e), YHWH speaks with him (23c).

It is in this speech (24e-27g) that YHWH announces the removal of the last bit of autonomy from his prophet: instead of going out, as above, the prophet-narrator is now commanded to lock himself in (24ef), so that he cannot go out any more (אלֹא תֵצֵא 25c). In addition, his ability of speech will now depend directly on YHWH's words (26a-27b); more precisely, it will be restricted to repeating YHWH's words (27cd). This brief account turns the prophet-narrator definitively into a kind of ventriloquist's dummy¹⁰⁰ with no capacity, in fact no personality, of his own.¹⁰¹

On the one hand, this necessarily results in a distancing effect regarding the persona of the prophet-narrator, as most readers would not want to identify with a mere puppet. On the other hand, it enhances the authority of the prophetic message because its deriving from YHWH, with no human contribution to it, is made very clear. There is no risk of alteration or misinterpretation on the part of the messenger. What this prophet pronounces *is nothing but* YHWH's word¹⁰² since he is unable to

¹⁰⁰ The image of the ventriloquist's doll is also used by Conrad, *Reading the Latter Prophets*, 172.

¹⁰¹ "Durch das Verstumungsmotiv, das das gesamte Buch durchzieht, wird die Persönlichkeit des Propheten geradezu ausgelöscht. Ezechiel ist reines Instrument und Sprachrohr Gottes." Konkel, "Prophet ohne Eigenschaften," 233.

¹⁰² I am here presupposing the interpretation by Davis, "Swallowing Hard"; *Swallowing the Scroll*, 48-58; and Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 65.

do otherwise. In summary, the rhetoric of 3:22-27 focuses less on the empathy with a character but more on underlining the divine value of the message itself.

7.3 Summary

This chapter looked at the original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*) and at selected redactional visions (1:1-2:2*; 3:12-14*; 47:1-12*; 3:22-27) with a narrative-rhetorical interest, examining aspects such as point of view, character portrayal, empathy, and the means of persuading the audience toward a desired attitude.

The prophet is always the first-person narrator; his main qualities in the original narratives are passivity and obedience to YHWH. As such, he is a contrast figure to the House of Israel and a role model. As he is entirely dominated by YHWH, who is the real central character, the prophet-narrator induces the audience to assume his same mind-set, unconditionally accepting God's words and actions. Though a harsh request, this offers – to the real-life historical readers – a way of making sense of the disaster and of maintaining a last hope for the future.

Of the three redactions discussed, the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1-2:2*) and that of the healing river (47:1-12*) reinforce the insistence on submission to YHWH through fantastic-utopian imagery. The vision of the Glory does this by underscoring the universal power of YHWH, and thus evoking awe; the vision of the river promotes hope in an idealized future. In these visions, not all of the three main characters appear, nor are they even mentioned; however, the role of the prophet-narrator is invariably the same.

Differently, in 3:22-27, the magnifying glass is on the prophet-narrator's passivity because he is rendered mute except when repeating YHWH's word. This extreme, debilitating dependence on YHWH is in contrast to the prior rhetorical

technique of having the reader empathize with the prophet; instead, it puts all emphasis on the authenticity and authority of the message.

The desired effect on the audience remains unaltered overall: whether in the earliest accounts or in more recent layers of Ezekiel's visions, the reader is supposed to respond neither with action nor with repentance but, in the first place, by admitting that YHWH is powerful and just and by expecting the sure realisation of YHWH's words.

8. YHWH and Israel: The Death and Re-Creation of a Relationship

From the portrayal of the characters, as analysed in the previous chapter, more light can now be shed on the development of the relationship between YHWH and the House of Israel, as it is presented in particular in the original writings, and then in selected redactional layers. This relationship is a major theme in all original vision accounts; it is described in terms of rebellion (2-3*; 8-11*), death (8-11*) and re-creation (37:1-14; 40-43*).¹

Subsequently, it will be worthwhile to briefly consider some theologically interesting aspects individually: the qualitative difference of YHWH's action in punishment and re-creation; the underlying pessimistic idea of human moral capacities; Israel's reaction of shame in 43:10; and the applicability of the concept of grace to the divine-human relationship in Ezekiel.

Finally, we shall look at these topics in some of the later stages of the text. Yet most redactions do not focus much on the relationship YHWH-Israel; all important

¹ The relationship dynamics between YHWH and Israel are developed also, perhaps more in detail, in other texts of the book of Ezekiel (e.g. Ezek 20). When read in sequence, the original vision accounts reflect on this changing relationship in some depth.

elements are contained already in the original vision accounts. However, the extensive law corpora within Ezek 43-48 and the partial-judgement revision in Ezek 9 lessen the original radicalism because in these additions human behaviour is regarded as much more decisive, and potentially more positive. Moreover, an interesting twist is created by the redactional combination and insertion of 11:1-21, since the arrangement of the two disputation words consciously points at the rivalry between two groups: the exiles and the ones remained in Judah. The question is now: which of them is the true “remnant of Israel”?

8.1 *YHWH and Israel in the Original Vision Accounts*

The relationship between YHWH and the House of Israel travels along an intriguing path. The four original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*) are symptomatic snap-shots of its development, the shift from judgement to restoration. In particular Ezek 8-11* and 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*, can be read as tales about the death and re-creation of the divine-human relationship. The terms “death” and “re-creation” are chosen because they convey the idea of a radical, complete and categorical end and an equally radical, complete and categorical new existence.²

8.1.1 Death Deserved

8.1.1.1 The Point of Departure (2:3-3:15*)

Recapitulating from the preceding chapter: in the call narrative (2:3-3:15*), the three most important characters of the book (YHWH, Ezekiel, Israel) are presented in their positions and their interrelations. The House of Israel, a collective figure, is lost in stubbornness (2:3). Ezekiel distinguishes himself by his listening to YHWH and particularly by his obedience in eating the scroll (2:8; 3:2-3). Moreover, the

² Similarly Donald E. Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 121f.

prophet's reverent silence emphasizes the disparity between YHWH and the "son of man." YHWH does not engage in dialogue; still, he communicates, despite being sure of Israel's refusal to listen (3:7). Without being explicit in this regard, the call narrative raises expectations of forthcoming judgement³ – it is palpable that YHWH will respond to Israel's rebelliousness. The audience is invited to identify with the prophet-narrator's passive-assenting attitude and to "take in" the book, like him, without contradiction.⁴

8.1.1.2 The Escalation of the Crisis (8-11*)

The message of judgement becomes openly manifest in Ezek 8-11*. It describes not only the typical sequence of transgression and punishment but indicates an even deeper crisis.

The graphic demonstration of Israel's תועבות, committed respectively by elders, women, and men (8:5–16), implies that all – the entire House of Israel – have, in one way or another, turned their back on YHWH, just as the men in the temple court have done physically (8:16).⁵ The key to their understanding is the quoted statement, "The LORD does not see; he has forsaken the land" (8:12ef; 9:9fg). The Hebrew wording of the first clause really suggests an even stronger meaning, as אין יהוה רֹאֶה translates literally, "non-existence of YHWH seeing" – or "there is no YHWH who sees." This is not about turning a blind eye on one or the other particular situation, but YHWH is either charged with being blind altogether or, as indicates the second clause, with being absent. The vision thus portrays a House of Israel that has, in principle and in practice, "lost trust in the Lord's promises and fear of his judgments.

³ See the slightly exaggerated delineation in Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View," 43f.

⁴ Refer back to Chap. 7.1.2 and 7.1.4.

⁵ Tuell, *Ezekiel*, 44f. From this viewpoint, the much disputed question whether the described cults could have taken place in Jerusalem in 597-587 or whether they are memories from the times of Manasseh, becomes almost irrelevant: the four scenes are as much symbolic as they are realistic, and Ezekiel does not distinguish between Israel's past and present in this regard (see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 90*; and Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 187 note 144).

In such comprehensive absence of faith, a human community must sooner or later fall into idolatry and mutual injustice, which is to be expected among the Gentiles but is terrible apostasy in Israel's case."⁶

This rejection of YHWH by his people is the reason for YHWH to "give their way upon their heads" (9:10), i.e. to likewise reject and destroy them. This is why YHWH orders the killing of the entire population (9:5–6), the desecration of the temple (9:7), and the scattering of fire coals over the city (10:2). At last, the Glory of YHWH (as the visible expression of the divine presence) deserts the discarded temple and city. Contrary to what Israel thinks of their God, "the destruction of Jerusalem is not because an impotent god has 'abandoned the land,' but it is rather because a providential and powerful Judge has left his shrine and land in revulsion of the abominations performed there."⁷

From YHWH's ideological point of view, the totality of the sin obviously justifies the totality of the judgement.⁸ The massacre of Jerusalem's inhabitants, the defilement of the temple with the corpses, the burning of the city and the removal of the Glory of YHWH can only signify YHWH's rejection of Israel;⁹ for all these were supposed to be symbols of God's presence and predilection. But since the chosen people has turned their back on him, the temple and the formerly holy city can no longer be regarded as privileged places of YHWH's presence.¹⁰ The vision carefully underlines that YHWH does this only *after* Israel has cut off their connection to him by asserting his absence and blindness, and by worshipping other deities in the very

⁶ Jenson, *Ezekiel*, 85. Similarly Sedlmeier, *Ezekiel 1-24*, 143; Rochester, *Prophetic Ministry*, 123.

⁷ Fishbane, "Sin and Judgment," 149.

⁸ Paul M. Joyce, "Ezekiel and Moral Transformation," in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text, Tradition, and Theology in Ezekiel*, ed. William A. Tooman and Michael A. Lyons, PrTMS 127 (Eugene: Pickwick, 2010), 141. See also above, 7.2.1.2.

⁹ According to Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 55-58, the use of "'no-forgiveness' – 'no-mercy' passages" such as 8:18; 9:5, 10 especially radicalizes the announced judgement. "Doom is justified and inevitable when the people are unforgivable; the denial of mercy or forgiveness reinforces and seals doom. Without this restraint the movement toward annihilation is accelerated" (quotes p. 58). On the "Rejection Motif" in Ezekiel and its close connection to the temple, see *ibid.*, 67-74.

¹⁰ Renz, "Zion Tradition," 89-91, 102.

temple. Hence every bond that used to tie YHWH and his people together has now been severed from both sides. Yet Israel without YHWH cannot subsist, for it is at the heart of their identity to be the people of YHWH.¹¹ Ezekiel's grasp of the event is therefore correct when he asks, "Are you destroying the entire remnant of Israel...?" (9:8f). His question is not so much concerned with the survival of individuals; rather, it is the question of whether Israel *in its collective identity as the people chosen by YHWH* will continue to exist.¹² For YHWH, this identity has already been nullified since Israel has been turning away from their God (9:9); now they are suffering the consequences.

From the perspective of Ezekiel's first temple vision, it is evident that the relationship between YHWH and Israel is so deeply in crisis that there is no way of repair.¹³ Indeed, it would seem that, at this point in time, the imminent Babylonian invasion was for the author of the first temple vision more than a punishment, after which Israel could eventually recover: it was the irreversible end, the extinction of the "people of YHWH."¹⁴ In his interpretation, Israel's conduct deserved death, and thus it would die.

8.1.2 Undeserved Re-Creation

8.1.2.1 New Life and Divine Spirit (37:1-14*)

However, historically speaking, the events of 587 were not the end of Israelite identity and religion. Presumably, this insight matured in Ezekiel over a period of

¹¹ In a similar sense, Luc, "Theology of Ezekiel," 141-143 repeatedly calls Israel "the people who bear his name," intending an inseparable relation between Israel and YHWH.

¹² In this interpretation, the marking of the innocent as narrated by the partial judgement revision (9:2e, 3cd, 4, 6b₁cb₂, 11) appears even more in contrast to the original vision account; refer to Chap. 3.2.2.

¹³ For "Ezekiel, the wrath of God is the consequence of Israel's failures to keep the covenantal obligations. Those transgressions are so severe that nothing is salvageable, neither the land, nor human identity – all must be destroyed so that they may be recreated de novo." Lapsley, "Ezekiel," 284.

¹⁴ This seems to apply to the entire first part of the book of Ezekiel; see on this topic Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 47-49; Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 177-199. In the light of the comparable events of 722, which marked the end of the Northern Kingdom, this expectation was not unrealistic.

time. Even so, he does not revoke his radical view: Israel had to die before it could live again.

The beginning of the vision of the dry bones (37:1-2) provides a vivid picture of its being “well and truly dead, a strewing of remains no longer even skeletal, so definitely of the past that the bones have separated and preserve no personal identities – no one can even point and say, ‘Alas, poor... I knew him well.’”¹⁵ So the reality of death is by no means denied. However, its irrevocability has to yield to YHWH’s creative power. The important point is that new life after the judgement cannot simply be a continuation of Israel’s former existence.¹⁶ This is indicated in 37:11-14* by the promise of the divine spirit (14a). Although YHWH will lead Israel back to their land (12d-f, 14c), which seemingly suggests a restoration of the status prior to the judgement, the gift of YHWH’s own spirit is something new and unprecedented. It will create a situation that is *essentially different* from that before 597. By receiving the spirit of YHWH, the House of Israel will not only live again (14b), but it will also not relapse into the same transgressions because their new mindset will make them willing and able to behave according to YHWH’s statutes.¹⁷

Once YHWH has put an end to the old state of affairs, he is free to create a new order. Like a landowner who tears down a house that is damaged beyond repair in order to build a new one on the same foundations, YHWH has to demolish his House of Israel,¹⁸ but – to remain in the image – he does not give up the building

¹⁵ Jenson, *Ezekiel*, 281. See Zimmerli, “Botschaft,” 129f.; and Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 171.

¹⁶ “The new creation of Israel is not described primarily as the survival of a remnant, but as the resurrection of a people.” Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 221.

¹⁷ The same rationale of leading the exiles back to the land and bestowing on them a new spirit (and heart), so as to enable obedience to YHWH’s “statutes” and “ordinances,” is present in an even more pronounced manner in 11:19-20; 36:26-27. The authenticity of both passages is disputed (on 11:19-20, see Chap. 3.2.1.2). An often discussed issue in this regard is the role of human free will in YHWH’s new order. Are the people turned into robots that are forced to obey – or is the exchange of (heart and) spirit a matter of repairing a defect, enabling rather than coercing to obey? (See below 8.3.2.2).

¹⁸ “The totality of destruction is not simply a function of the divine wrath. Rather, from Ezekiel’s point of view, nothing of the old is useable; God *must* start from scratch.” Lapsley, “Ezekiel,” 290. (Her italics).

project. However, he adjusts the foundations (by giving Israel his own spirit) so as to guarantee greater stability for his new construction.

8.1.2.2 Newly Ordered Relationship (40:1-43:10*)

This new construction resting on transformed foundations is symbolized in the new temple of Ezek 40-43*. After the prophet-narrator has finished his detailed visit of the new sanctuary (40:5-42:20*) the Glory of YHWH moves in with all its splendour (43:2-5*). Those chapters may be called the vision of *restoration*¹⁹ but in the strict sense of the term this is not entirely correct because the vision depicts a completely new situation, not the restored state of any pre-existing condition.²⁰ This becomes evident for example through the fact that “the city,” in contrast to Ezek 8-11*, is never named in Ezek 40-43*; further through the solemn emptiness of the new temple building (again in contrast to Ezek 8-9*), and finally through the contrasting juxtaposition of past and future in the divine speech (43:7-10): for instance, to sum up the past, YHWH affirms, “I have consumed (כלה) them in my anger (אף)” (8e); to illustrate the future, twice he assures, “I will dwell (שכן) in their midst” (7c, 9b).²¹

The new order is characterized by the presence of the Glory of YHWH “among the people of Israel forever” (43:7c) and by a strict separation of “the holy and the common” (42:20e). YHWH’s confidence that this new sanctuary will never be defiled (43:7d) only makes sense in a completely renewed context. For were Israel, the city, and the temple still the same as before, they would likely be as prone to sin

¹⁹ Levenson, *Theology*; and Greenberg, “Program of Restoration” call it the “Program of Restoration.”

²⁰ So also Georg Christian Macholz, “Noch einmal: Planungen für den Wiederaufbau nach der Katastrophe von 587; Erwägungen zum Schlussteil des sog. Verfassungsentwurfs des Hesekiel,” *VT* 19 (1969): 347.

²¹ The two phrases are reminiscent, respectively, of the words of judgement and of restoration pronounced earlier in Ezekiel: אף + כלה occurred before in 5:13; 7:8; [13:13;] 20:8, 21, whereas the verb שכן recalls the noun מְשֻׁכְנֵי in 37:27 (on the relation between the second temple vision and the oracle in 37:21-28, see Chap. 5.4.4.2). The contrast of Israel’s past and future actions has been described in Chap. 7.2.2.2.

and corruption as they had been in the past. It is important to notice in this regard that the change of attitude both of Israel and of YHWH is described only in the divine speech in 43:7-10. Therefore, their re-established relationship is anticipated by YHWH; it is not a portrayal of the present, not even of the visionary present.²² In fact, Israel does not even know about it yet – hence the emphasis on the prophet’s obligation to deliver the message (40:4; 43:10). In the sequence of the four visions, Israel has already received the promise of YHWH’s spirit (37:14a). It seems reasonable to see herein the cause of the change in Israel’s attitude.

It is clear, in 40:1-43:10*, that the initiative lies on the divine side alone. The new temple has obviously been created by divine means because the prophet seems to be the first human being to see it. This means, YHWH will freely create a new order, a new relationship – and thus a new Israel, if by this term we understand the *people chosen by YHWH*. The establishment of this new order is, once again, not announced in conditional terms but has to be accepted and acknowledged.²³

Ezekiel never says that a new future might depend on a better behaviour on Israel’s part. There is indeed to be a future but it is undeserved and depends solely on YHWH. ... the conditional “if” has no place in Ezekiel as a ground for restoration.²⁴

In contrast to the judgement, for which humans are held responsible, the restoration does not depend on them. However, once inaugurated, the new era will give rise to remarkable changes in human behaviour. This will assure that the vicious circle of sin and punishment will not ever recommence.²⁵

²² Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live* affirms at various points throughout her book that the prophet’s message is “distinctly future-oriented” (e.g. 110f.; 140f.) as both the divine action and the consequent acquiring of knowledge are always pictured in the future of the narrated time.

²³ Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 239f., cf. 262, observes that “this shift from responsibility to passivity mirrors the social experience of the exiles” in their lack of power and autonomy (quote p. 240). As so often, theology might be inspired by the actual circumstances of life.

²⁴ Joyce, “Ezekiel and Moral Transformation,” 148f., 150. Mein remarks similarly, “the hallmark of Ezekiel’s restoration is divine initiative.” Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 215.

²⁵ In this regard, see Ehud Ben Zvi, “Understanding the Message of the Tripartite Prophetic Books,” *ResQ* 35 (1993): 93-100. He concludes that, once God eliminates the causes for the people’s rebellious behaviour, the new ideal situation will, by its own inherent logic, not be reverted again (p. 100).

8.1.3 Considerations on Theological and Anthropological Aspects

Given the significance of what has been discussed so far for the theology of Ezekiel, some points of interest that are implicated by the shift in the divine-human relationship shall now be discussed a little further. This involves no claim to comprehensiveness as this would require a separate thesis for each topic. This section cannot be more than a brief sketch of some aspects of the theological richness contained in Ezekiel.

8.1.3.1 YHWH's Role in Judgement and Re-Creation

The two major actions of YHWH, punishment and renewal, are as much equivalent in terms of their powerfulness as they are poles apart in terms of their effects. With regard to divine freedom and initiative, there is a further qualitative difference between the two. In Ezek 8-11*, YHWH takes violent action to punish Israel. Although his judgement is unquestionably a dramatic display of power, YHWH's initiative is, in actual fact, limited in this instance. For in destroying Israel, YHWH is only *reacting* to a man-made situation rather than acting out of his own free will.²⁶ The narrative in Ezek 8-11* emphasizes this *reactive* character of the divine punishment because the usual concern for YHWH's sovereignty is in this case subordinate to the concern for his justice. For the sake of theodicy²⁷ the text underlines strongly that it was Israel, not YHWH, who set in motion the dynamics leading to disaster: only after (and because) Israel has severed the ties to their God, YHWH in turn renounces being their God and acts as their enemy.

However, though YHWH has to vindicate himself against the profanation of his "holy name" (43:7d, 8c) by punishing his people, their complete destruction

²⁶ Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 238f.

²⁷ On theodicy in the face of the Babylonian Exile, see particularly Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 83-86.

would, paradoxically, constitute an even greater profanation²⁸ because YHWH is inseparably linked to Israel as its official state deity. The complete extermination of his people would leave YHWH in a position that could easily be misunderstood as though YHWH was either unfaithful or not able to defend Israel against foreign nations and their gods. For his own reasons, YHWH has once defined himself as “the God of Israel” and while YHWH certainly can exist without this connection, he cannot be present in history without a people. Even if on a less existential level, YHWH’s identity is associated with being the God of Israel as much as Israel’s identity rests on being the people of YHWH. It is owing to precisely this theocentric reasoning that YHWH’s “desperate desire to be known and acknowledged by Israel”²⁹ leads not only to “merciless measures” *against* his people but eventually also to creating a new future *for* his people. “By logical necessity the restoration of God’s name involves the restoration of the holy nation.”³⁰ Accordingly, even though the coordinates of YHWH’s relationship with his people are being redefined, there is continuity: “the unity of history is now clearly seen to derive solely from the absolute sovereignty of God, the constancy of purpose which is manifested in judgment and destruction as well as salvation.”³¹

In short, YHWH defends himself against the profanation of his name both in destroying and in re-creating Israel;³² yet in the first case his reaction is partly against his own nature, since in destroying his people YHWH severs, as it were, part of his

²⁸ See Ezek 20; also, for example, Luc, “Theology of Ezekiel,” 141; Wong, “Profanation/Sanctification,” 218, 222.

²⁹ Both quotes: Fishbane, “Sin and Judgment,” 150. See also Gowan, *Theology*, 129.

³⁰ Wells, *God’s Holy People*, 168; cf. 182f. In other words, “God’s actions for the sake of his name involve, at least in part, issues of credibility and apologetic, a concern for what might happen to God in relationship to the world, not just Israel, if certain actions are not taken. Ultimately, this sort of action on God’s part is not motivated out of a selfish concern, but for the sake of God’s relationship with the world.” Terence E. Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective*, OBT 14 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 68.

³¹ Davis, “Swallowing Hard,” 230.

³² In this regard, I agree to some extent with Schwartz, “Ezekiel’s Dim View,” 55f. that exile and return are both part of one divine plan. However, in contrast to Schwartz, I do not see the necessity to view Ezekiel’s God in such exclusive terms as an egocentric and rather short-sighted tyrant. Schwartz seems to jump to extreme conclusions.

own identity. By contrast, in the undeserved re-creation of Israel, YHWH acts freely, safeguarding both his honour and his identity as the God of Israel.³³ Hence YHWH reveals himself “more” God – if this was quantifiable – in re-establishing the relationship with Israel than in howsoever powerfully turning against them.³⁴

Certainly, the reasoning that YHWH saves Israel out of concern for his own name and identity is much less sympathetic than most other prophetic announcements of deliverance. It is a well-observed fact that “Ezekiel is devoid of all soft-hearted features and warmer tones. There is no mention of mercy, love, covenant faithfulness, the justice that brings salvation. This whole vocabulary is missing from the book of Ezekiel.”³⁵ This is because, for the theology of its author, the key attributes of YHWH, which he believes the most adequate to sustain faith and hope, are supreme power, justice, and holiness – not love and mercy.

8.1.3.2 Anthropological Pessimism

Ezekiel’s uncompassionate idea of God may be troubling for readers; his deeply pessimistic view on human moral capabilities is no less challenging. The “house of rebellion” seems to be genuinely unable to adhere to YHWH’s commandments because their generation-long practice of iniquity (2:3; 3:7) has made them defiant by nature.³⁶ That is why repentance has become impossible: the

³³ Ben Zvi, “Understanding,” 99; Wong, “Profanation/Sanctification,” 232.

³⁴ Referring to 37:1-14, Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 191f. states that “die Handlung an den Knochen bzw. an Israel auch das Gottsein Gottes offenbaren soll, wenn in vv.6.13f. die Gotteserkenntnis als Ziel der Handlung angegeben wird.”

³⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 2, 247 in relation to 36:16-38. German original: Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 877. Note the contrast to Jeremiah in this regard, as outlined by Schwartz, “Ezekiel’s Dim View,” 49-51; Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 242f.

³⁶ This theme is even more prevalent in Ezek 20. In this regard, Zimmerli arrives at saying, “Ezekiel is the great proclaimer of ‘radical evil’; one is almost tempted to introduce the term ‘original sin.’” Walther Zimmerli, “The Message of the Prophet Ezekiel,” in *The Fiery Throne: The Prophets and Old Testament Theology*, ed. K. C. Hanson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 84. Likewise, Schwartz, “Ezekiel’s Dim View,” 46 speaks of “genetically incorrigible sinners.” See moreover, Konkel, “Prophet ohne Eigenschaften,” 234f.; he also argues (*ibid.*, 238) that this negative view might be a reason for eliminating the prophet’s personality.

people do not even perceive their actions as wrong any more.³⁷ The nonchalance with which the people perform cults to foreign deities in the temple of YHWH (8:5-16) demonstrates at least a wanting sense of appropriateness, besides the rejection of YHWH.

The Ezekielian anthropology is fairly pessimistic as to moral capacity: first, the rebelliousness is rooted too deeply in the people's hearts; after the punishment, they are "dead," hence utterly incapable of regaining YHWH's favour by their own efforts. As a result, any potential for hope needs to be placed in YHWH, in order to be valid. The motivation for restoring the relationship is either intrinsic to YHWH – or it is null and void. Ezekiel situates the reason for God's saving actions with the divine concern for being *known* just discussed, as opposed to having it resting on Israel's behaviour.³⁸ Joyce has expressed this aptly in the laconic phrase, "YHWH acts because he is YHWH and must be known to be YHWH."³⁹

Against the background of the pessimistic idea of humanity/Israel, and faced with the exile, the anchoring of all reason for hope in YHWH alone appears as the only trustworthy way into the future.⁴⁰ "The idea that people were capable of

³⁷ The issue of moral capacity is amply discussed in Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*. She asserts that Ezekiel challenges the dominant biblical view on "moral selfhood" through "the repeated depictions of human beings as inherently incapable of virtuous moral action" (p. 6); i.e. they are not able to choose the right option, or even to distinguish right from wrong. This ability can only be given to them "as a free and prior gift from God" (p. 6); it then expresses itself in the first place as knowledge and only secondarily as right action. To be sure, the book also contains rare summons to repentance (e.g. 18:30-32); clarification is needed as to how these relate to Ezekiel's prevailing moral pessimism. But this would extend the scope of this thesis too far.

³⁸ The re-creation "takes place so that Yahweh will be acknowledged insofar as in his new act of creation he reveals himself to his people." Zimmerli, "Message," 92. "Entscheidende Innovation der 'Geschichtsentwürfe' im Rahmen der Restitutionsverkündigung Ezechiels gegenüber den in seinem Auftreten als Gerichtsprophet entwickelten ist die Ablösung des Tat-Ergehen-Zusammenhangs sowie einer in der regelhaften Abfolge von Schuld, Zorn und Gericht sich äußernden Korrelation von göttlichem und menschlichem Handeln durch einen vergleichsweise komplexeren Rahmen der Erfahrung und Interpretation geschichtlicher Prozesse, in dem die 'Selbstbezüglichkeit' Jahwes (למען שמי) dominiert." Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 468.

³⁹ Joyce, "Ezekiel and Moral Transformation," 156. He casts this fittingly in the expression "divine self-interest" (ibid, 154). This intrinsic motivation is expressed more plainly in other parts of the book, such as Ezek 20 and 36:16-32.

⁴⁰ "Because the people's destiny does not rest on human deeds but on God's name, their restoration from exile is guaranteed." Luc, "Theology of Ezekiel," 143. In the same vein, Berquist states, "The reason God saves is precisely that the people do *not* deserve it, ..." Jon L. Berquist, *Surprises by*

understanding their moral failings and transforming themselves simply could not bear the weight of what Ezekiel saw as the history of failure and present of exile and destruction.”⁴¹ Human compliance, morality, and even lovability, are so unreliable in the eyes of the exilic author that they need to be kept entirely out of the equation. The very theocentricity that proclaimed YHWH as the cause of disaster subsequently forms the grounds on which a radically new beginning is possible. Only in a second step, as a consequence of the divine action, will Israel realize their fault and change their behaviour.⁴²

8.1.3.3 Shame

In this context, the prediction in 43:10, that the House of Israel will be ashamed (כַּלְמָה *ni.*) when hearing about the new sanctuary, is interesting. Shame was never mentioned as provoked by the punishment (for example in Ezek 8-11*) or in connection with repentance. Instead, shame is anticipated as a spontaneous response⁴³ to the perfection of the temple, i.e. the new order of the divine-human relationship that YHWH has brought about. This view, that deliverance should evoke shame, is unique to Ezekiel; it recurs not only in 43:10 but throughout the book in most instances where shame-vocabulary is employed (6:9; 16:52-63; 20:43; 36:31-32; 39:26; 44:13).⁴⁴ Shame is, in Ezekiel, always provoked by a divine action; when left to their own devices, people do not even have this capacity.⁴⁵

the River: The Prophecy of Ezekiel (St. Louis: Chalice, 1993), 109 (his italics).

History indeed contains many warnings against placing too much trust on human moral abilities.

⁴¹ Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 106.

⁴² This is stressed various times by *ibid.*, for example 6f., 109-111, 181f.

⁴³ On the contrary, Odell, *Ezekiel*, 498-500, 531-533. sees the new temple as *removing* Israel’s shame but her interpretation is not convincing. Differently, perhaps a little simplistically, for Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 267 Israel feeling ashamed is “die andere Seite der Medaille” of YHWH’s acting for the sake of his name: just as the destruction of Israel brings shame on YHWH, the restoration of Israel shames the people on account of their sinful past.

⁴⁴ Ezek 6:9: the exiled survivors loathe themselves (קוֹט) for “their evil”; 16:52-63: Jerusalem will be ashamed (בוֹשׁ/כַּלְמָה) when she is restored and forgiven; 20:43: after their return to the land, Israel remembers the past in self-loathing (קוֹט); 36:31-32: after receiving a new heart and spirit, Israel remembers its guilt and feels self-loathing (קוֹט) and shame (בוֹשׁ/כַּלְמָה); 39:26: after Gog’s defeat,

Perhaps the reaction of feeling ashamed is provoked by the fact that YHWH acts now essentially differently from Israel: during the judgement, as discussed above (8.2.3.1), YHWH brought “their way upon their heads” – in other words, he just completed what Israel was doing. YHWH’s behaviour was not fundamentally different from human behaviour; it was superior in power but not qualitatively.⁴⁶ By contrast, in resurrecting Israel and in reinstating, through the new temple, a new relationship between him and his chosen people, YHWH takes action freely out of his own initiative and with divine resourcefulness, as he re-creates Israel out of their dead remains (37:1-14*). The quality of these acts – impossible to human beings – and their unilaterality – without human advance performance – mark a fundamental difference from human conduct. This difference is what defines YHWH’s *holiness*.⁴⁷ By creating a new future for Israel, YHWH demonstrates his being God – his holiness – in a much more unequivocal way than in his powerful work of destruction.

In this view, it is precisely the recognition of YHWH’s holiness (expressed in the temple) that will lead to the recognition of the people’s own un-holiness, and thus to shame.⁴⁸ The sentiment of shame can be defined as “*self*-judgment in terms of some ideal that is one’s own” when people “feel they have fallen short of an ideal.”⁴⁹

while living in peace, Israel shall “carry their shame” (וַיִּשְׂאוּ כָל־מִתָּתָם); 44:13: the Levites shall “carry their shame” and not serve as priests. Only the “shame of the nations” (הַרְפַּת / כְּלִמַּת הַגּוֹיִם), the derision by the neighbouring nations, is promised to find an end with the restoration (34:29; 36:6-7, 15, 30).

⁴⁵ Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live* emphasises this strongly.

⁴⁶ Wong, “Profanation/Sanctification,” 233f. notices correctly that “the sanction not only does not rectify the ‘disorder’ caused, but even contributes to the ‘disorder’ (that is, the profanation of the sanctuary and God’s name)” and sees the same rationale in the Priestly flood account in Gen 6. Both in Ezek and in P, God’s destructive reaction brings “the result of the original action to its logical conclusion” before eventually granting restoration.

With a slightly different accent, Baltzer stresses, “Es verdient Beachtung, daß gerade dort, wo die Heilserwartung Israels zu ihrem Ziel kommt, ganz betont die vergangenen Sünden des Volkes und Jahwes Gericht vergegenwärtigt werden. Sie werden nicht aus einem beschaulich veranlagten Drang nach Erinnerung genannt, sondern deshalb, weil nach Ezechiel Jahwes Heilshandeln ohne sein zuvor geschehenes Gericht nicht denkbar ist.” Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterocesaja*, 56.

⁴⁷ Sedlmeier, “Transformationen,” 227f.

⁴⁸ Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 178.

⁴⁹ Johanna Stiebert, “Shame and Prophecy: Approaches Past and Present,” *BibInt* 8 (2000): 256 and 257, respectively. On general theories of shame, see *ibid.*, 255-267; Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 130-139; Johanna Stiebert, *The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible: The Prophetic Contribution*, JSOTSup 346 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 3-23.

For this reason Israel can experience shame only once it has come to know and internalize the ideal of YHWH's plan with it (43:10). As long as the people were caught in their inherited stubbornness (Ezek 2-3), they had no sensitivity for disgrace (Ezek 8) because doing God's will was no ideal of their own. Punishment alone could not change their mind-set. Only when YHWH grants political, religious, and above all spiritual renewal ("I will put *my spirit* in you!" 37:14a), will Israel "know YHWH" (37:6, 14) and themselves in a new light:

The people's deliverance paradoxically entails painful revelations concerning their own past behaviour. The capacity to remember their actions as loathsome, to possess such devastating clarity of self-perception, is the equivalent of a new moral self, capable of making accurate moral assessments.⁵⁰

This "new moral self" accrues from the contemplation of *how things should be* according to God's plan. Israel will be given the capacity for "entering into an honest assessment of the past and assuming full responsibility for what it has done."⁵¹

For Lapsley, this experience has strong individual traits. Given that in Ezekiel the House of Israel is throughout a collective character, I would tend to see even the process of acquiring a "new moral self" in terms of a national experience,⁵² just as the judgement was a communal trauma. This is not to exclude the personal aspect, which remains crucial, but as part of, and surpassed by, the collective experience. Israel's shame for their past transgressions indicates that, *as a people*, they will have internalized YHWH's laws and acquired a new moral consciousness.

⁵⁰ Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 141 (in reference to Ezek 20). In her analysis of Ezek 36 (pp. 142-145), Lapsley arrives at the conclusion that "disgrace-shame is a gift from God," a vital factor for the restoration of the divine-human relationship because it enables the people "to see themselves as 'they really are,' i.e., as Yahweh sees them" (quotes p. 145; see also pp. 188f.). For a negative view on shame as the effect of restoration, see Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View," 63f. Though his interpretation is innovative, there is little evidence for it from the text.

⁵¹ Davis, *Swallowing the Scroll*, 115. Although Davis refers to Ezek 20:42f., her ideas on the meaning of the reversal of restoration and shame are generally applicable and not restricted to Ezek 20.

⁵² In this regard, see Smith-Christopher, *Biblical Theology of Exile*, 120-123. In his discussion of shame in exilic penitential prayers, he underlines its socio-political function as criticism of history. "In the end, shame is a mark of honesty – it is an admission that allows transformation because it offers hope that the new way will not repeat the acknowledged mistakes of the old way. ... To confess that a society was wrong in the past is to declare that a new identity is necessary, and perhaps even emergent: 'We are not them.'" (p. 122). Examples from the twentieth century illustrate that the need for this kind of collective shame, sadly, never loses its topicality.

8.1.3.4 Grace

As we have seen, in Ezekiel's theocentric view the new beginning depends solely on YHWH, independent of any human accomplishment or even repentance. On the one hand, this grows out of a pessimistic anthropology – the author does not believe in the people's capability to comply with the divine laws. On the other hand, by emphasizing that all critical action is carried out by YHWH, Ezekiel develops, centuries before Paul's reflections on the crucified Christ, a theology reminiscent of, or at least preparatory to, the doctrine of salvation by grace alone.⁵³

Scholars who speak about the beginnings of "grace" in Ezekiel usually refer to texts such as Ezek 20 or the new heart and spirit in 11:19; 36:26-27.⁵⁴ In those passages, the self-referentiality of the divine acts of renewal and the irrelevance of Israel's demeanour for its own salvation undoubtedly become most evident.

Israel can look ahead to salvation without having done anything for it in return. It is obvious that, from here, the way is not far to the notion of justification of the sinner by grace alone (*sola gratia*). ... If ever there was one Old Testament author who conceptually prepared the Pauline doctrine of justification, then it is the writer of this chapter [i.e. Ezek 20], which has been receiving far too little interest from the theological public.⁵⁵

⁵³ On this topic, see e.g. Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 223-225; Joyce, "Ezekiel and Moral Transformation," and, in his commentary, "'Grace' is absolutely characteristic of Ezekiel. Although the word *hēn*, often translated 'grace', is not used, there is much in Ezekiel that shares affinities with what the Christian tradition has spoken of in terms of 'grace'. And far from this being an anachronistic imposition of New Testament ideas, it is Christianity that is the borrower here. Exilic theological developments are fundamental to New Testament and especially Pauline theology." Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 27. On the topic of justification before God in the OT and ANE, see also Thomas Staubli, "Alttestamentliche Konstellationen der Rechtfertigung des Menschen vor Gott," in *Biblische Anthropologie: Neue Einsichten aus dem Alten Testament*, ed. Christian Frevel, QD 237 (Freiburg: Herder, 2010), 88-133. The article provides an interesting overview, though he fails to mention Ezekiel.

⁵⁴ For example, Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 482-484; and, on Paul's use of "heart of flesh" in 2 Cor 3:3, Harm W. Hollander, "'A Letter Written on Tablets of Human Hearts': Ezekiel's Influence on 2 Corinthians 3:3," in *The Book of Ezekiel and its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge and Johannes Tromp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 110-118.

⁵⁵ Rüdiger Bartelmus, "Menschlicher Misserfolg und Jahwes Initiative: Beobachtungen zum Geschichtsbild des deuteronomistischen Rahmens im Richterbuch und zum geschichtstheologischen Entwurf in Ez 20," *BN 70* (1993): 46. "Israel kann Heil erwarten, ohne etwas dafür getan zu haben. Daß von da der Weg zum Gedanken der Rechtfertigung des Sünders 'sola gratia' nicht mehr weit ist, liegt auf der Hand. ... Wenn es einen alttestamentlichen Autor gibt, der die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre sachlich vorbereitet hat, dann ist es der Schreiber dieses in

However, from what has been said so far, the same notion is present in the original vision accounts when read together.⁵⁶ The visions in 2:3-3:15*; 8-11* are very clear about Israel deserving not only punishment but rejection and the “death” of their collective identity; likewise the re-creation of the “dead” through the gift of the divine spirit (37:1-14*) and the reorganisation of the divine-human relationship (40:1-43:10*) is unmistakably the work of YHWH alone and entirely unprompted by human merits. These notions contain

the same basic, generic theological structures that are invoked [by Christians] to interpret the ‘Christ Event’: the death of useful human initiatives, a caesura in the man-God relationship, a resurrection of human possibilities by a creative act of divine grace.⁵⁷

In fact, when comparing certain sections of Paul’s letter to the Romans with Ezekiel’s theology as defined here so far, similarities are readily evident. For example, in Rom 3:9-28⁵⁸ Paul first illustrates the sinful state of humankind (3:10-18) by paraphrasing Ps 14:2-3 LXX,⁵⁹ which could pass as a condensed

der theologischen Öffentlichkeit viel zu wenig beachteten Kapitels [i.e. Ezek 20].” The above translation is mine.

⁵⁶ That the original vision accounts are meant to be read together is evident from their interrelatedness, as discussed in Chapter 6.

⁵⁷ Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 223. Raitt saw in the common notion of undeserved grace in both exilic and neotestamentarian theology a promising path for Jewish-Christian theological dialogue.

⁵⁸ “We have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written:

‘There is no one who is righteous, not even one;
there is no one who has understanding, there is no one who seeks God.
All have turned aside, together they have become worthless;
there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one.
Their throats are opened *graves*; they use their tongues to deceive.
The venom of vipers is under their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.
Their feet are swift to *shed blood*; ruin and misery are in *their paths*,
and the way of peace *they have not known*.
There is *no fear of God* before their eyes.’

... But now, apart from law, *the righteousness of God has been disclosed*, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, *since all have sinned* and fall short of the glory of God; *they are now justified by his grace as a gift*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ... *He did this to show his righteousness*, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was *to prove* at the present time *that he himself is righteous* and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. ... For we hold that a person is justified by faith *apart from works* prescribed by the law” (Rom 3:9-18, 21-26, 28 NRSV; italics added).

⁵⁹ Ps 14:2-3 LXX (Brenton): “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there were any that understood, or sought after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become good for nothing, there is none that does good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose

description of Ezekiel's "house of rebellion." Paul's reasoning is of course distinctly universalistic and christological, and emphasises the importance of personal faith. But, like Ezekiel, Paul also stresses that God's saving action "by grace as a gift" (v. 24) is intended "to prove ... that [God] himself is righteous" (v. 26). Therefore, even the neotestamentarian grace contains a markedly self-referential aspect. Most importantly, the gap between divine will and human conduct is bridged, both in Ezekiel and in Paul, in a one-sided effort; "the god achieves right action on the part of his people only by doing himself what is required on their behalf."⁶⁰

To be sure, it is undeniable that "YHWH's action in Ezekiel has a harder edge to it than most Christian presentations of grace."⁶¹ This is explained not only by Ezekiel's greater age, but first and foremost by his dramatic historical circumstances, which made a "harder edge" more appropriate.

An in-depth examination of the relationship between Ezekiel's and Paul's version of *salvation by grace alone* would decidedly go beyond the scope of this thesis. The same is true for the other aspects discussed. The aim of this section is simply to outline some of the great theological potential that derived from the existential crisis of the Babylonian Exile. It is impressive that this potential is fully extant in the oldest layers. Regardless of the unforgiving and pitiless images and statements that so easily hamper the approach to Ezekiel, this makes of him a more

mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." Cf. Ps 5:9; 10:7; Isa 59:7-8; Pro 1:16.

⁶⁰ Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 246.

⁶¹ *ibid.* On this subject, Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View," 64-67 is correct in pointing out that there is no mentioning of divine love or forgiveness as reasons for YHWH's unilateral act of restoration. Yet the ill intentions, which Schwartz infers from this unemotional and self-concerned image of God, seem exaggerated. Whether YHWH saves Israel out of compassion or because he needs them in order to be present in history surely makes a conceptual difference but it does not *a priori* exclude the notion of grace. To put it with Lapsley, "The human condition may be seemingly irremediably broken in Ezekiel, and the divine wrath is arguably nowhere more fierce, but it is also only by divine unilateral action alone that the human-divine relationship can be set aright. In that sense, the book of Ezekiel bears some resemblance to the writings of Paul in the New Testament." Lapsley, "Ezekiel," 285.

than respectable theologian.⁶² Zimmerli couched this awareness, over sixty years ago, in the following words:

In Ezekiel we hear a curious and strange formulation of “grace alone” (*sola gratia*). But who could fail to see that all of his prophecy is extremely close to that kerygma that experiences in Jesus Christ the final divine proclamation and its extension beyond the historical people of Israel? Who could fail to see that even in our broken time, which suffers from the loss of its righteousness and its true life, Ezekiel’s words are full of breathtaking actuality?⁶³

8.2 *Developments in Selected Redactional Layers*

The theological considerations based on the portrayal of the relationship between YHWH and Israel so far were limited to the original vision accounts. At this point, we shall take into account the redactional layers. It is an interesting observation that these, generally, do not focus as much on the relationship between Israel and YHWH. Chapter 7.3 has already discussed the vision of the Glory of YHWH and the vision of the river; in neither is the House of Israel mentioned, though at least the healing river has implications for their living in the land. Neither vision adds significant new aspects to the themes discussed here above. The other redactional layers, namely the cherubim redaction (Ezek 10), the two wheel redactions (1:15-21; 10:9-12, 16-17), the two redactional vision accounts (3:22-27; 44:4-6*), and the insertion in 37:7-10, usually expand on one aspect of the basic narrative. Overall, they do not deal explicitly with the relationship between YHWH and Israel.

There are, however, two noteworthy innovations in the presentation of Israel: firstly, a considerable decrease of the anthropological pessimism (in Ezek 9; 43-48);

⁶² “If at times Ezekiel’s portrayal of his God strikes us as somewhat uncongenial and forbidding, this should not blind us to the profundity and the grandeur of his theological presentation.” Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 129.

⁶³ Walther Zimmerli, “Das Gotteswort des Ezechiel,” in *Gottes Offenbarung: Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Alten Testament*, TB 19 (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1963), 147. The cited translation is taken from: *Fiery Throne*, 106.

secondly, the contrast of two competing groups of Israelites through the combination of 11:1-13, 14-21.

8.2.1 More Confidence in Moral Ability

It can be argued that the partial-judgement revision in Ezek 9 and the wide-ranging law corpora introduced in Ezek 43-48⁶⁴ diminish the original pessimism of Ezekiel's anthropology. Contrary to the former emphasis on inherent immorality and, at best, passivity, in these redactions human behaviour plays a much more decisive role and has, at least in theory, the potential of being righteous.

8.2.1.1 The Righteous Citizens in Ezek 9

As we have seen, the original vision accounts, along with other passages of the book, advocate a very pessimistic view on human moral capacities, arriving at denying that Israel, in particular, is able to make righteous moral decisions on their own.⁶⁵ The partial-judgement revision in Ezek 9 stands in opposition to this general outlook. By means of just a few additions,⁶⁶ this redaction transforms the originally total judgement, in which all inhabitants of Jerusalem are killed (9:6a), into a partial judgement, sparing the innocent and righteous, "those who sigh and groan over all the abominations" (9:4c).

This presupposes, however, that for certain individuals within the House of Israel it was possible to discern good from evil, and faithfulness from idolatry. These individuals were moreover able to choose the right option for themselves and to feel troubled by the wrong choices of their fellow citizens. They are spared because they *deserve* it.

⁶⁴ According to Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 286f., the bulk of the law texts in these chapters is part of what he calls the "second expansion" (*zweite Fortschreibung*). Refer to Chap. 5.3.

⁶⁵ Refer to Section 8.1.2.3.

⁶⁶ Namely 9:2e, 3cd, 4, 6b₁cb₂, 11 and the direction אֶתְרִי in 9:5b. For the presupposed redaction criticism, see Chap. 3.2.2. This revision could not be dated.

Herein lies the greatest difference to the original account. For the original temple vision, the problem of individual behaviour is really a minor matter, as both guilt and punishment are pertaining to *the House of Israel* – and this collective entity *does not deserve* mercy (8:18; 9:5, 9-10). The question of individual survivors is outside the author's interest.⁶⁷ For the real threat is not the loss of individual lives but the loss of Israel's collective identity as the people of YHWH. While the redactor seems to consider individual exemption from the punishment as equivalent to salvation, in the logic of the original texts physical survival – as in the case of the exiles – does not replace the need for YHWH's restoration (which is an intrinsically *undeservable* gift).

At any rate, the fact remains that through the conversion of Ezek 9 into a partial judgement, not only the harshness of the message of destruction is mitigated, but also the anthropological pessimism as it is prevalent in the original writings.

8.2.1.2 The Laws (Ezek 43-48)

In the examination of Ezek 40-48 this thesis restricted its attention to the really visionary parts. Therefore, a detailed discussion of the law corpora, which over time were accumulated within those chapters, is not possible here either. However, in the context of trusting or not in the human capability of moral discernment and moral choices, the laws should be at least briefly mentioned. In comparison to the passivity expected by the basic vision account (40:1-43:10*), the laws obviously reflect a later stage of the “new era,” as they prescribe Israel's own active contribution to making the new society function.⁶⁸ Laws embrace, by their very nature, the basic assumption

⁶⁷ Joyce, *Divine Initiative*, 61-66, though treating all of Ezek 9 as original, arrives at the similar conclusion that the element of individualism present in the marking of the righteous is subordinate to the general aim of announcing a thorough collective judgement. “Indeed, there seems to be no direct interest in the possibility that there may be some righteous to be spared” (ibid., 63).

⁶⁸ This tension between activity and passivity in Ezek 40-48 is noticed also by Zimmerli, “Planungen,” 233f. and Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 251-255.

that humans are capable of complying with them – otherwise the institution of laws would be absurd. In this general sense, the pertinent redactions in Ezek 43-48 have a more positive view than the original writings on people’s competence for “doing the right thing.”

8.2.2 Jerusalem vs. *Golah* (11:1-21)

Although the oldest versions of the two disputation words 11:3-12* and 11:14-20* are authentic Ezekielian writings, their expanded and combined insertion (11:1-21) occurred redactionally at a more recent point in time.⁶⁹ The two oracles each express the relationship between YHWH and Israel in their own way. However, by their juxtaposition a greater contrast is created between the inhabitants of Jerusalem, whose pretensions are rejected, and the Babylonian *golah*, who are promised to return to their homeland and to receive a new heart. Since this rivalry between two Israelite groups has not yet been encountered in the visions so far, it will be worthwhile to look at how 11:1-21 in its redactional final form portrays both groups and their relationship with YHWH.

8.2.2.1 YHWH and Jerusalem in 11:1-13

The disputation word about the cauldron and the meat (11:1-13) concentrates on the relationship between YHWH and a specific group of leaders in Jerusalem.⁷⁰ These are introduced by the prophet-narrator quite neutrally as “officials of the people” (1d) but immediately characterized by YHWH as “men who plan iniquity (הַחֹשְׁבִים אָוֶן) and who advise wicked advice (הַיֹּעֲצִים עֲצַת־רָע)” (2b). Their slogan, “The time is not near to build houses; this [city] is the pot, and we are the meat” (3b-d), remains obscure in detail but it seems to communicate a sense of false security and

⁶⁹ Refer back to Chaps 3.2.1 and 6.2.3.

⁷⁰ Even when disregarding the secondary verses 11:1-2, 13 (see 3.2.1.1), it seems the disputation word was always addressed to leading inhabitants of Jerusalem.

arrogance. The narrative does not describe these men's actions directly; all that the reader comes to know about them is reported in divine speech. Once again, it is YHWH's view that both the prophet-narrator and the audience are supposed to internalize. In YHWH's words, the officials around Jaazaniah and Pelatiah have filled the city with murder victims (6ab, 7b_{pc}). Violent as they are, though, they *fear* the sword (הָרַב יְרֵאָתָם; 8a); hence they will *fall* by the sword (בְּהָרַב תִּפְלוּ; 10a) because YHWH will *bring* the sword upon them (בֹּאֵה *hiph.* 8b). Besides, YHWH will take them out of the city (7e, 9a), give them into the hand of enemies (9b), and judge them (9c; 10b, 11c). The aim of all this appears to be the demolition of their overstated self-confidence, replacing it with the knowledge of YHWH. In fact, the only positive statement is the twice repeated recognition formula: "you shall know that I am YHWH" (10cd, 12ab). So far, this disputation word differs from other announcements of judgement only in that it is addressed to a specific group of Jerusalemites rather than to the entire House of Israel.

The delivery of this message is entrusted to the prophet who is, in contrast to the original temple vision, repeatedly commanded to speak (נִבֵּא *hiph.* 4ab; אָמַר 5c, 16a, 17a). Although his speech is not explicitly reported, it is implied in the link verse 13a ("while I was prophesying"). The demise of Pelatiah comes unexpectedly, for the reader as well as for the prophet-narrator. While the cause of death remains unclear,⁷¹ the event makes the prophet exclaim in distress, enquiring whether YHWH would leave a "remnant of Israel" (13c-f).

8.2.2.2 YHWH, Jerusalem and the Exiles in 11:14-21

The second disputation word (11:14-21) is supposed to function as the answer to this cry. However, its focus shifts from Jerusalem to the exilic community

⁷¹ Schöpflin, "Destructive and Creative Word," 115f. sees behind the death of Pelatiah (and in 37:7-10) a magical understanding of prophecy.

(15ap-b). While 11:1-13 is concerned with a particular group of Jerusalemites in opposition to their victims, 11:14-21 contrasts all the inhabitants of Jerusalem (יְשֻׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם; 15a) with the exiles, of whom the prophet is part (אֲנִשִּׁי גְּאֻלְתֶּדָה; 15ap). The former do not appear as proper characters; they are only required as the source of yet another quote to be contradicted. The deportees, in their opinion, “have gone far (רחק) from the LORD; to us this land is given in possession” (15bc).

YHWH’s reply does not immediately address the expectations of those who remained in the city but speaks about the fate of the exiles. Verbal clauses with the exiles as subject can be differentiated into statements about their past/present (*x-qatal* clauses) and statements about their future (*w^eqatal* and *x-yiqtol* clauses).⁷² YHWH claims responsibility both for their present state and for their future. The deportees have come (בוא 16f) or, more precisely, been scattered (פיץ *ni*. 17e) among other countries. YHWH affirms, repeating the verb רחק from the Jerusalemites’ saying, that he brought the exiles far away (16c) and scattered them (פיץ 16d).

However, they are remote only in relation to their homeland, not to their God who declares, “I have become for them לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט (a little a sanctuary / a sanctuary for a little while) in the countries where they have gone” (16ef), i.e. YHWH himself takes on the function of the very sanctuary that has become unavailable for the deported people.⁷³ The text leaves us with no further explanations as to how exactly the author envisioned this sanctuary. In any case, seeing as the temple used to be the privileged place for the encounter with YHWH, 11:16e designates a real but limited accessibility of YHWH for the exiles: somehow, the contact can and will be maintained even in Babylonia and without a proper place of worship. This does not

⁷² The alteration of second and third person plural masculine forms in 11:16-20 MT is not taken into consideration here (refer to Chap. 3).

⁷³ On the מְעַט מִקְדָּשׁ, see Joyce, “Dislocation and Adaptation,” 52-58; Ruwe, “Veränderung,” 3-11; Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 99f., “God’s presence is not consigned to sanctuary, for God is a sanctuary” (his italics); Tuell, “Divine Presence and Absence,” 107f.

ultimately substitute for the temple – indeed, for Ezekiel’s idea of restoration a new temple is fundamental.⁷⁴ Rather, the *מִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט* represents a kind of interim connection between YHWH and the exiles, “a real, if only partial, anticipation” of the covenant to-be-restored.⁷⁵

Accordingly, the exile is only a temporary condition, as YHWH will gather (קבץ 17c) and assemble (אסף 17d) the people and give (נתן) them back their territory (אדמת ישראל; 17f). This is in plain contradiction to the belief of the remaining population of Judah that the land has become *their* property (15c). When the former deportees come back (בוא 18a) to the land they will remove (סור *hiph.* 18b) the idols.

On top of all this, YHWH declares that he will also give (נתן) to the repatriates *one heart* (לֵב אֶחָד; 19a) and a *new spirit* (רוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה; 19b), removing (סור *hiph.*) their *heart of stone* (לֵב הָאֲבָן; 19c) in exchange for a *heart of flesh* (לֵב בָּשָׂר; 19d). Bearing in mind the broad significance of the Hebrew terms לֵב and רוּחַ, respectively as the centre of personality, seat of intellect, memory and will, and as a person’s attitude, vigour, and mere breath of life,⁷⁶ the replacement of heart and spirit virtually signifies to create a person anew – or to perform a complete “reset” to their original state. For a heart of stone is certainly not a natural condition but would, if it occurred literally, lead to an immediate death. Therefore, the result of the “operation” is not some kind of superhuman ability but a “heart of flesh”: the restitution of natural human faculties. In line with the anthropologic view discussed above, the capacity to “follow my statutes and keep my ordinances” (v. 20ab) is obviously seen as a property of the heart of flesh only, while the heart of stone is entirely devoid of such

⁷⁴ Renz, “Zion Tradition,” 91f. and Ezek 40-48.

⁷⁵ In support of this interpretation, Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 249; and Joyce, “Dislocation and Adaptation,” 54f. (quote p. 55) have drawn attention to the structural similarity of 11:16e to the covenant formula (יהיה + two constructions with ל).

⁷⁶ Cf. 37:1-14. On both terms, see Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1974), 34-43; Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 114-116.

faculty.⁷⁷ Obedience to YHWH's laws is in this perspective regarded as a positive ability connatural to humans. Instead of being a limitation to human free will (understood as liberty to disobey), the accent is all on their freedom to live according to the divine ordinances.⁷⁸ Once Israel (the former exiles) will be restored to this primordial state the covenant can be re-established (20de).

8.2.2.3 Summary (11:1-21)

Through the connection of the two oracles in 11:1-21, an antithesis is created between the proclamation of judgement to Judah's leading officials in 11:7-12 and the promise of restoration to the exiles in 11:16-20. While YHWH admits and affirms his function as a judge in the past, he also announces his future role as saviour-God for the exiles and affirms his temporary presence with them.

Whilst in the original temple vision account the exiles are present only as the addressees (8:1; 11:25) and do not play any part in the body of the vision account, 11:1-21 betrays a specific interest in the relationship between those who remained at home and those who went into exile. This relationship is portrayed as dominated by tensions and rivalry.⁷⁹ In 11:16-20, YHWH takes the side of the exiles, defending them against the Jerusalemites and, more importantly, directing the promise of restoration to the exiles only. In the context of the question-and-answer scheme created by the connection through 11:13, this means that the "remnant of Israel," which will survive and be the foundation of a new Israel, is found exclusively with the *golah*, not in Jerusalem.

⁷⁷ Raitt, *Theology of Exile*, 181f; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 165; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 352f.

⁷⁸ Contra Moshe Greenberg, "Salvation of the Impenitent *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*: Ezek 36:16-32," in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*, ed. Jan Assmann and Gedaliahu A. Stroumsa, Studies in the History of Religions (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 268-271; Schwartz, "Ezekiel's Dim View," 47, 60, who see herein the negation of human free will. Positions similar to mine are advanced e.g. by Fohrer and Galling, *Ezechiel*, 62; Baltzer, *Ezechiel und Deuterocesaja*, 73-83; Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*, 182; Sedlmeier, "Transformationen," 228-233.

⁷⁹ On this topic, see especially Rom-Shiloni, "Voice of the Exiles," 11-18.

8.3 Summary

This chapter has looked at the original vision accounts (2:3-3:15*; 8-11*; 37:1-14*; 40:1-43:10*), at selected redactions (in 9:2-11; 43-48), and at 11:1-21, examining primarily the relationship between YHWH and Israel as displayed in each account or layer. The major characteristics and theological aspects concerning this relationship are present in the original vision accounts, though there are other texts, such as Ezek 20, which are more explicit in certain regards.

When the original vision accounts are read in order, they tell about the death and resurrection of Israel's identity as the people of YHWH. The connection between these opposites lies in Ezekiel's absolute theocentricity: YHWH punishes and YHWH redeems – both for the sake of his “holy name.” However, the judgement is caused by human (mis)behaviour, whereas the restoration is purely an act of divine free will; hence YHWH's holiness is revealed in the restoration to a much greater extent. The almost logical consequence of theocentricity is a distrustful view on human capabilities: nothing is required from Israel prior to their restoration because they are essentially capable of nothing. Even in order to recognize the truth about themselves, and to experience shame as a result, Israel needs a previous intervention by YHWH. This combination of human weakness and divine self-referential initiative produces a theology in which many scholars have seen the preliminary of the notion of undeserved grace (salvation by grace alone).

While most redactions do not add to these topics, the tendency of a more positive outlook on human moral abilities can be detected in the partial-judgement revision of Ezek 9 and in the genre of law texts, amply inserted in Ezek 43-48.

The insertion of the joint disputation words 11:1-13, 14-21 brings a twofold novelty. Firstly, the juxtaposition of the two oracles presents a strong tension between two rival groups within the House of Israel: those who remained in the land

and those who went into exile. YHWH aligns himself with the exiles, defining them as the “remnant of Israel.” Secondly, 11:16e and 11:19 contain theologically remarkable statements about YHWH’s temporary presence in exile as a “sanctuary to some extent” (16e), and about the complete inner renewal YHWH will perform on his people, exchanging their heart and spirit (19). While a decision as to whether in particular 11:19 is authentic or redactional was not possible,⁸⁰ its statement is in line with the general theocentricity.

The portrayal of the divine-human relationship in Ezekiel, though certainly not flattering for the human part, is a profound reflection on the reasons that led to the national disaster of 597/587. Having given up every faith in human virtue, Ezekiel still refuses to give up hope and thrusts the entire weight of justice, capability, and expectation onto YHWH – not because he thinks YHWH is *merciful* enough to save Israel, but because he believes YHWH is *powerful* enough, and it is in his own interest, to do so.⁸¹

9. Of Monsters and Men: Intermediate Agents in the Vision Accounts

The portrayal of the characters has taken into account, up to now, only YHWH, the prophet, and the House of Israel. Yet there are other characters as well: an outstanding feature of all four major vision accounts, in their final form, is the appearance of auxiliary characters somehow in between the human and the divine. Several of them are described as (similar to) men, but also, for example, the four-headed creatures in 1:5-26 and the personalized *הַרְרִיָּה* in 37:9 fall into this category.

⁸⁰ Refer to Chap. 3.2.1.2.

⁸¹ “Während man seine [i.e. Gottes] mitleidigen Regungen als flüchtig und vorübergehend und sein liebendes Erbarmen als nicht tragfähig genug betrachten kann, muß sein Handeln aus eigener Notwendigkeit als einleuchtend erscheinen.” Fohrer and Galling, *Ezechiel*, xxix.

This chapter will survey all intermediary agents according to the chronological order of the accounts or layers in which they appear. It will evaluate, in particular, their description, their narrative function, and their connection to YHWH.

9.1 *Intermediate Agents in the Original Vision Accounts*

In the original accounts 2:3-3:15* and 37:1-14*, YHWH and the prophet (and indirectly the House of Israel) are the only characters present. On the contrary, both original temple visions (8-11*; 40:1-43:10*) have one or more additional characters, men, acting on YHWH's behalf.¹

9.1.1 The Seven Executioners of the City (9:1-10:7*)

The oldest occurrence of intermediate agents seems to be in the original account of the first temple vision (8-11*). The anonymous guide in 8:5-18 is quickly identified with YHWH in person (cf. 8:6f, 18); but though adducing the evidence of Israel's guilt, YHWH does not perform the judgement himself. Instead, he summons the "executioners of the city" (פְּקֻדָּוֹת הָעִיר 9:1b):² six men carrying "weapons of destruction" (9:1c, cf. 2d) plus a seventh man, apparently unarmed and wearing linen garments. Apart from the fact that they appear so suddenly and that six men suffice to massacre an entire city's population, nothing qualifies these "men" explicitly as more than human.

The six armed men receive instructions to kill everyone, first in the temple and then in the city. Meanwhile, the seventh man is told to take fire coals from the temple and to "scatter them over the city" (10:2). In contrast to his comparatively peaceful

¹ Refer back to Chap. 6.2.

² The translation of פְּקֻדָּוֹת הָעִיר is disputed. "This noun corresponds closely to the verb pāqad and has just about the same range of meanings. Its commonest use is to express ... intervention by a superior power (usually God or a king) in order to make a great change in the situation of a subordinate. In most of the occurrences of p^eqūddā of this type the change is for the worse." Victor P. Hamilton, "פְּקֻדָּה (p^eqūddā)," in *TWOT*, vol. 2, (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 732.

look – unarmed and dressed like a priest – his task is the destruction of the city itself. The men obviously act under YHWH’s orders. More precisely, it may be affirmed that they act in YHWH’s stead, because they literally fulfil what YHWH had earlier declared to do himself: “my eye will not spare, and I will not have pity” (8:18bc). Now this is spelt out (“kill” 9:5c, 7f, “cut down to destroy” 6a, “defile” 7b) and delegated to the executioners: “*your* eye shall not spare, and *you* shall not have pity” (9:5de). The mysterious men take YHWH’s place in bringing death to the city.³

The idea of seven subordinates who inflict damage to humans on behalf of a deity is not original to Ezekiel. In fact, the seven men are reminiscent of the *Sebetti* (Akkadian: Seven), a unit of seven Babylonian minor deities that plays a role for example in the Erra Poem.⁴ The god Erra vents his anger on humanity through the *Sebetti*,⁵ who are introduced in a way not unlike the seven men in Ezek 9.⁶ Besides this literary source, little *Sebetti* figurines with weapons in both hands were apparently widely-used in Babylonia for apotropaic purposes;⁷ hence it is to be expected that Ezekiel knew about their existence and function.

This is not to say that Ezekiel simply copies the idea. For instance, the seven men in Ezek 9 are certainly not deities. As with other concepts, Ezekiel alters what he adopts to suit his own agenda. By introducing specific agents for the execution of the judgement, the statement that YHWH personally kills his people is avoided; at

³ Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 175f. regards the number seven as signifying completion in this context.

⁴ The Babylonian Erra Poem was so widely diffused that it can be called “the ‘first best seller’ of Mesopotamian literature.” (Bodi, *Poem of Erra*, 52 note 3; see pp.52-56). Proposals as to its date range from the eleventh to the eighth century, which makes it in any case older than the book of Ezekiel. There are several points of contact between Ezekiel and the Erra Poem, which Bodi examines at length. See also Manfred Krebernik, “Wo einer in Wut ist, kann kein anderer ihm raten: Zum göttlichen Zorn im alten Orient,” in *Divine Wrath and Divine Mercy in the World of Antiquity*, ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, FAT 2/33 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 55-66.

⁵ Bodi, *Poem of Erra*, 99-105; also Luigi Cagni, *The Poem of Erra*, SANE 1/3 (Malibu: Undena, 1977), 18f.

⁶ The *Sebetti* are characterized on Tablet I 32-38; similarities to Ezek 9:1-7 include, for example, “At the wielding of your fierce weapons ...” (Erra I 35; cf. Ezek 9:1c, 2c); “Strike upwards and downwards, spare nobody!” (Erra I 37; cf. Ezek 9:5b-d); “Kill (all) that lives!” (Erra I 38; cf. Ezek 9:6a). Quoted from Bodi, *Poem of Erra*, 101.

⁷ See *ibid.*, 109f.

the same time it remains beyond doubt that YHWH is the origin of the devastation. Perhaps this serves theodicean reasons, so as to circumvent, at least, the image of YHWH massacring women and children. Alternatively, it is conceivable that the seven men, who are suggestive of soldiers, represent the Babylonian army and thus reflect Ezekiel's interpretation of the imminent historical situation: when Nebuchadnezzar's military would conquer and destroy Jerusalem, in truth, unbeknown to them, they would be carrying out nothing but YHWH's judgement.

9.1.2 The Man with the Measuring Reed (40:3-43:5*)

In 40:3b-e, another intermediate agent is introduced. Like the seven executioners, he too is "a man," carrying the tools needed for his task in his hand: "a line of flax and a measuring reed" (40:3d). In contrast to them, however, there is something non-human, or super-human, about him, as his appearance is described as being "like bronze" (40:3c), which might indicate his affiliation with the sacred.⁸

The bronze man will be the prophet-narrator's personal guide until 43:5, and will reappear in the expansion of 44:1-2⁹ and 47:1-12. His tasks include leading the way, measuring the relevant parts of the building (in Chapters 40-42), and giving explanatory comments at crucial moments: at the beginning (40:4) and at the centre point of the tour (41:4cd). Thus he is the only intermediate figure in the vision accounts who talks to the prophet.

Therefore, the bronze man in the second temple vision fulfils precisely the function that YHWH had at the beginning of the first temple vision (8:5-18). He

⁸ For example Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 229; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 30. Bronze (תְּשֻׁבָּה) is in its many occurrences in Ex (P) closely related to the Tabernacle (e.g. Ex 26:11, 37; 27:2-4, 6, 10, 11, 17-19; 30:18), and accordingly, in 1 Kings 7:13-47, to Solomon's temple. Perhaps this is the background for Ezekiel's use of it here.

As mentioned in 6.2.5.2, verses 9:2 and 40:3 share a series of lexemes, though partly employed in different contexts: תְּשֻׁבָּה (9:2a; 40:3a), תְּשֻׁבָּה (9:2g; 40:3c), יָדָא (9:2c; 40:3d), יָשָׁר (9:2a; 40:3e), and עֲמֹד (9:2g; 40:3e).

⁹ The question whether the man or YHWH is the subject of 44:1-2 was discussed in Chap. 5.3.3.1 and decided in favour of the man.

substitutes for YHWH as guide in a manner similar to the seven men substituting for YHWH as executioner.¹⁰ However, the reason is here not apologetic but owing to narrative logic. Since the climax of 40:1-43:10 is the entry of the Glory of YHWH into the new temple (43:2), it is fundamental that YHWH is absent prior to that. YHWH cannot show the prophet around the sanctuary before he actually arrives.¹¹ On the other hand, the narrative requires the prophet's knowledge of the temple before he sees YHWH return, and it also requires a guide to make sure the prophet learns (and then transmits) the "right" parts of the building and its dimensions.¹² The author's solution to this dilemma was to delegate the role of the guide to a kind of "special deputy": the man. The fact that he is called a *man* (עֶבֶד 40:3b) makes it very clear that he is distinct from God;¹³ but since he is moving in very holy spheres – in 41:3a he even enters the most holy place – he is qualified, by his "appearance like the appearance of bronze" (3c), as somewhat more than a mere human being.¹⁴

9.1.3 Summary

The two original temple visions employ special characters that range somewhere between human and divine. These appear as almost normal men, equipped with the tools needed for their duty. Their description is short and functional as the focus is entirely on their task;¹⁵ their appearance does not distract from the plot but instead contributes to it. They have no intermediary function as

¹⁰ This is one of the reasons why Rudnig regards the man as late redactional insertion; see Rudnig, *Heilig und Profan*, 101f. He does not consider the above suggested interpretation.

¹¹ So also Kasher, "Anthropomorphism," 202; and Konkel, "Gola von 597," 371 (see pp. 365-371 in decided criticism of Rudnig). Kasher finds an analogous reason for the presence of the man in 47:1-12: "if God Himself were to accompany the prophet on his tour of the stream, this would signify that God had left His Temple"; this of course would be counterproductive to the narrative.

¹² See Chap. 7.1.

¹³ The distinction between YHWH and the man is evidenced also by 40:4f; 43:6; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 30. Konkel further remarks correctly that the man's bronze appearance resembles more the living beings (1:7) than the figure above the throne.

¹⁴ In fact, the guide can be seen as a precursor of the *angelus interpres* in later apocalyptic vision reports; Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 41*.

¹⁵ "Erzähltechnisch ist er [i.e. the bronze man] damit als Hilfspersonal zu charakterisieren und damit den sechs Männern der ersten Tempelvision zu vergleichen." Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 30 note 78.

they do not relate to the prophet at all but only to YHWH.¹⁶ In both visions, the men act in place of YHWH where, on narrative or theological grounds, YHWH's action in person is impossible or undesirable.¹⁷

9.2 *Intermediate Agents in the Redactions*

9.2.1 **The Four Living Beings (1:5-26)**

The border to Phantásia is crossed in the redactions, beginning with the four composite creatures in the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:5-26).¹⁸ In modern terms we might call them “monsters”; the vision calls them by the vague and unspectacular term *חַיִּוִּת* (1:5a), which is commonly used for wild, untamed animals.

These “animals,” however, are said to have “human form” (5c), although there is not much to them that is human. Each has not only four wings (6b) but also four faces (6a): one human, one of a lion, one of cattle, and one of an eagle (10). The “human form” must therefore refer to the creatures' upright posture. Indeed they have straight legs – but with calf hooves (7ab). They also have human hands (8a). Just like the man in 40:3, they look as if they are made of bronze (7c).

As stated earlier, the four creatures are iconographically related to so-called sky bearers known in Mesopotamia.¹⁹ YHWH appears in Babylonia on his heavenly throne – but, as a measure of caution, the throne, the firmament, and most of all the four living beings, form, as it were, a triple buffer zone. The entire constellation

¹⁶ Kasher, “Anthropomorphism,” 202.

¹⁷ The partial-judgement revision adds “the case/inkpot of a scribe” (*קֶטַח הַסֵּפֶר*) to this man's attributes (9:2e, 3d, 11b) and has him firstly draw a *taw* (x) on the forehead of the righteous. The redactional scribe contrasts in two points with the original tasks of destruction. Firstly, the scribe does not act in YHWH's place – YHWH stated precisely that he would *not* spare anyone (8:18). Secondly, the scribe is the only intermediate character in all vision accounts – in fact, the only character at all, besides the prophet – to address YHWH, confirming the completion of his first mission (9:11). Otherwise, the seven men do not speak at all.

¹⁸ The living beings and their literary relationship to the living cherubim in the amplification of Ezek 10 have already been discussed in Chaps 2.4.2.3 and 6.4.1.

¹⁹ Refer to Chap. 2.4.2.3; Keel, *Jahwe-Visionen*, 207-216, 230-250.

simultaneously emphasises YHWH's holiness and safeguards it from direct contact with, and contamination by, the unclean land.²⁰

Grammatically, the living beings are subjects to movement verbs (הלך 9bc, 12abcd, 19a, 21a, 24b; [לָא] סבב 9b, 12d) and, towards the end of the vision, to verbs of terminating motion (עמד, 21b, 24b [25c]; רפה 24b [25c]).²¹ The four creatures neither speak nor are they addressed. The fact that they touch each other's wingtips, forming a square that moves in perfect unison, results in a somewhat static impression, despite the strong accent on motion.²² Both aspects agree if the four creatures are seen, in a secondary role, as living components of the travelling throne.

Hence the four living beings have a double function: as sky bearers they separate and protect the sphere of the Holy from the profane land, and highlight YHWH's universal authority; as throne bearers they facilitate unrestricted mobility. Both functions together illustrate that YHWH's dominion and presence are limitless, and certainly not confined to temple or land. In this sense, the living beings underline certain aspects of YHWH's character; they serve YHWH but – contrary to the above discussed men – they do not act on YHWH's behalf. At the same time they are far more extraordinary than the men in the original visions, and there is a notably higher interest in the details of their appearance. All this contributes to the conclusion that the living beings are essentially symbols rather than agents: they are the personalized highlighting of YHWH's authority and holiness, without having any discrete individuality.

²⁰ “God's presence is removed from the prophet by a graduated, spatial system of tiered holiness.” Cook, “Ezekiel,” 245; similar Krüger, *Geschichtskonzepte*, 433. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 36 does not recognize this indirect affirmation of YHWH's holiness. Keel, “Herrlichkeitserscheinung,” 145 speaks of transcendence (“wenn auch vorerst nur räumlich”).

²¹ Verses of the wheel redaction have been included. 1:25c is textual-critically insecure.

²² So for example Zimmerli, *Ezechiel*, 54.

9.2.2 The “Likeness of an Appearance of a Man” (1:26c-27; 8:2-3b)

The figure looking like a man in 8:2-3b derives from the redactional effort to assimilate Ezek 8-11 to Ezek 1. In 1:26-27, the same humanlike character, his lower half like fire and upper half like *הַשֵּׁמֶל*,²³ is as close a personification of YHWH as may be dared. Within Chapter 8, the likeness of a man takes part in transporting the prophet from his house to Jerusalem, carrying him rather uncomfortably by the hair. Under the assumption that 8:4 was added later than 8:2-3b,²⁴ the luminous figure is also the one who guides the prophet through the temple area. This means he is identical to YHWH. Therefore 1:26-27 and, depending on it, 8:2-3b contain a daringly anthropomorphic and detailed image of YHWH.²⁵ For this reason they speak of “likeness” and “appearance,” in order to avoid any impression of a heretic identification of God and human being.²⁶ YHWH is not man, yet the image of a likeness of human appearance (*דְמוּת כְּמֵרְאֵה אָדָם*) may be acceptable, seeing that humankind is created as a likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26 *בְּצַלְמֵנוּ בְּדְמוּתֵנוּ*).

This interpretation applies well to 1:26-27 – the awe-evoking vision of the Glory of YHWH concludes with the very sight of God. However, it does not explain why the anthropomorphic image of YHWH was inserted at the beginning of the first temple vision. Being only a single and unprepared occurrence, the powerful image loses much of its effect. Neither on a narrative level nor theologically is it necessary that the prophet *sees* YHWH before he even reaches Jerusalem. So it seems that the rationale of the insertion was simply to connect the ending of Ezek 1 to the beginning

²³ Many authors compare this description with the famous ninth-century ceramic image of the god Aššur; e.g. *Ibid.*, 56f; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 36f; Odell, *Ezekiel*, 30-32.

²⁴ Refer back to Chap. 3.2.

²⁵ Referring to the colophon immediately following 1:26-27, Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 113; and Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 87-91 point out that, in comparison to P, Ezekiel’s *כְבוֹד* has much stronger anthropomorphic traits. Likewise, Kasher, “Anthropomorphism,” 193 takes the human form of the Glory (1:26-28) as one proof for Ezekiel’s overall anthropomorphic conception of God, understanding every appearance of the Glory of YHWH as humanlike. While he might be overstating this point, it is interesting that he does not mention 8:2-3b.

²⁶ Refer back to Chap. 2.4.

of Ezek 8, by creating an implicit back-reference. Essentially, the fiery manlike appearance in 8:2-3b has no practical significance other than its linking and harmonizing value.²⁷

9.2.3 The Four Living Cherubim (10:1-22*)

Distinct from the temple cherubim statues, the four living cherubim in 10:1-22 form a living throne, awaiting the Glory of YHWH like a taxi in front of the building.²⁸ It was the result of Chapter 6.4 that they are inspired by the living beings of Ezek 1 in combination with the temple cherubim mentioned in the original vision account 8-11*. In this respect, their first function is to create coherence between the two visions, increasing the unity of the book.²⁹

The living cherubim can be the subjects of verbless clauses, infinitive constructions, and of verbal sentences that employ verbs of motion (עמד 10:3a; רזם 10:15a, 19b; נשׂא 10:19a; 11:22a; הלך 10:22c). Even on the level of grammar, the cherubim thus emphasize the mobility of YHWH's Glory, an idea that is of course given already by the image of a flying throne itself.

In contrast to Ezek 1, the emphasis of the living cherubim seems to be more on their function and less on their appearance. The very first attribute mentioned about the cherubim is the sapphire throne over their heads (10:1b₂); thus the throne is given more prominence here than in 1:26.³⁰ The second piece of information about the cherubim is their position (10:3a). After that, the sound of their wings is described (10:5); this too has a narrative function as the movement of the wings prepares the

²⁷ Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 30 note 77 wonders whether the reason why 8:2-3b tries to conflate the hand of YHWH, the spirit, and the manlike figure might be a critical stance toward an "inflation" of intermediaries.

²⁸ Refer to Chap. 3.2.3; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 151.

²⁹ Wood, *Of Wings and Wheels*, 135.

³⁰ The firmament too is mentioned in 10:1b₁ but only as an indication as to where the throne is ("on the firmament"), not in its own right. In comparison, the valuation seems to be the reverse in Ezek 1, as the firmament is not only properly introduced in 1:22a but repeatedly referred to in 1:23a, 25a, 26a₁ whereas the throne occurs only twice in 1:26a₂c.

cherubim's departure. Disregarding the wheel redaction (10:9-12, 15-17) and other more recent verses (10:8, 13, 14), the cherubim are next seen accommodating their divine passenger (10:18), rising up from the ground (10:19ab), and flying, with the Glory of YHWH above them, to the east gate (19de). Only then, more details of their appearance are given, combining the classical features of cherubim as winged quadrupeds with those of the four sky bearers: four faces (not one), four wings (not two), and something like human hands (10:21).³¹ While the cherubim certainly have a symbolic value,³² they are portrayed more in terms of their purpose than the living beings of 1:5-26 and the cosmological connotations of the sky bearers are less accentuated in the cherubim. Despite the assimilation to 1:5-26, the cherubim essentially remain what they classically are: throne bearers.

In sum, the cherubim are at the service of YHWH's mobility and independence from the Jerusalem temple. They also underscore YHWH's power, yet different from the living beings in 1:5-26 they have a practical function in the narrative's plot, providing a means for YHWH's glorious exit from the temple. On a book-editorial level, the similarity between living beings and living cherubim increases coherence.

9.2.4 Breath, Wind, and Spirit (37:9)

About two-thirds of the 52 times that the term *כרוב* recurs in the book of Ezekiel are within the final-text vision accounts.³³ Of these, only ten or eleven occurrences are authentically Ezekielian,³⁴ distributed through all four original vision accounts

³¹ As noticed in Chap. 6.4.1, the features of the living beings avoided are those least compatible with cherubim. In chronological order, the cherubim are the first intermediate beings in the visions that are not described as humanlike in any way whatsoever. There is also no reference to bronze (possibly because the real temple cherubim were gold-covered but this is not mentioned either).

³² Keel, "Herrlichkeitserscheinung," 139 explains cherubim, and composite creatures in general, "als eine Art gefährlicher Kampfhunde, ... die im Dienste anderer gefürchtet und gehasst sind, im eigenen Dienst aber eine 'Waffe' darstellen, die Respekt verschafft." In this sense, the cherubim, just like the living beings, highlight the majesty and power of YHWH.

³³ Ezek 1:4b, 12b, 20a[b]d, 21d; 2:2b; 3:12a, 14ac, 24a; 8:3c; 10:17c; 11:1a, 5af, 19b, 24ab; 37:1b, 5b, 6d, 8e, 9bdf[*bis*], 10c, 14a; 42:16a, 17a, 18a, 19a, 20a; 43:5a (35 occurrences).

³⁴ Ezek 3:14c; 8:3c; 11:24ab; 37:1b, 5b, 6d, 10c, 14a; 43:5a; and perhaps 11:19b.

(though mostly in 37:1-14*). These oldest instances of רוח are always anarthrous.³⁵ Semantically, they can be subdivided into two groups: natural רוח and divine רוח. In the first case, רוח signifies either “breath,” as the principle of all life (37:5b, 6d, 10c), or it refers to the human mind (3:14c; [11:19b]). In the second case, רוח can indicate a divine wind-like force,³⁶ which transports the visionary over long distances (8:3c; 11:24ab; 37:1b) or over a barrier (43:5a): a kind of tool for well-directed movement. The only reference to YHWH’s רוח in the sense of divine will and mind is 37:14a.³⁷

Only the redactor of the vision of the bones (37:7ab, 8e-10b) adds a new, unprecedented meaning by introducing הַרוּחַ (37:9bdf), with a definite article.³⁸ The article is here not simply an anaphoric reference to the life-breath (רוח) in 37:5-6, because the latter is said to be a gift directly from YHWH: “*I will put breath in you*” (6d). הַרוּחַ appears to be an autonomous persona distinct from YHWH, since it is verbally addressed by YHWH via the prophet. Moreover, “the Spirit” is not in the same location as YHWH and the prophet; it needs to be sent for. At the same time it is portrayed as omnipresent, in that it comes from all four directions of the compass at once (9f).³⁹ Strangely enough, it seems that the capacity to raise the recomposed bodies to life resides not with YHWH but with the blowing of הַרוּחַ (cf. 9gh). On the one hand הַרוּחַ appears as the personified life-breath – even more: as a personified

³⁵ The definite article in 37:10c (הַרוּחַ) is a redactional assimilation to 37:9; originally, it read רוח without article (refer to 4.2.2.5).

³⁶ This רוח is specifically defined as “divine spirit” (11:24a) and “spirit of YHWH” (37:1b). At the same time, the basic meaning of “wind” is still significant, as the transporting רוח seems to be a wind-like force at YHWH’s disposal; in fact, scholars argue whether this transporting רוח is better translated as “spirit” or “wind.” For an overview of the discussion, see Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 83-85, 108-114.

³⁷ For a summary of how various other exegetes categorize the meanings of רוח in Ezekiel, see *ibid.*, 18-20.

³⁸ See Chap. 4.2.2. This is probably to be distinguished from 1:12b, 22ab where הַרוּחַ determines the direction in which the living creatures and the wheels move. Of the latter, the literature offers divergent interpretations. For example, Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 68 refers to the will and mind of the living creatures. Block, “Prophet of the Spirit,” 36, sees in 1:12, 20abd, 21d “the vitalizing principle of life that comes from God himself” at work. Similarly, Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 90f. argues that הַרוּחַ in 1:12b, 22ab indicates a specific presence of YHWH, connected to the Exodus tradition. Contrary to Block, Robson allows for the possibility that the three determined occurrences of רוח might refer back to 1:4b, “a storm wind” (Robson, *Word and Spirit*, 89).

³⁹ Höffken, “Beobachtungen,” 313. Similarly (but without assuming redaction), Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 895.

divine energy; for only God can give life. On the other hand, “the Spirit” is certainly not a second deity – the theocentric and anti-idolatric disposition of the book of Ezekiel would forbid this. Besides, YHWH clearly has authority over *קְרוּחַ*, and its arrival “from the four winds” indicates its world-immanent nature.

Similar to the various men in 9:1-10:7; 40:3-43:5, *קְרוּחַ* assumes a duty that, in principle, would be YHWH’s task. Different from these, it is not presented as a humanlike substitute but as an impersonal wind-energy. More importantly, there is no obvious narrative or theological necessity⁴⁰ to delegate precisely the act of revivification to an intermediate agent. Ought this, of all tasks, not be accomplished by YHWH? It is possible that the redaction was inspired by theological-pneumatological ideas of its time. If the redaction in 37:7-10 is indeed as recent as often assumed,⁴¹ for example a Hellenistic influence might be conceivable, in terms of a notion of *πνεῦμα* as the divine animating principle that permeates the cosmos.

In any event, the hypostatic Spirit that is closely connected to, but distinguished from, YHWH adds a universal dimension and some more drama to the vision. This intermediate agent is the only, whose summoning requires the collaboration of the prophet, it is also the most abstract figure and the one whose relation to YHWH is the most ambiguous.

9.3 Summary

To summarize this survey, there is an appreciable difference between the intermediate agents in the original temple visions and those introduced by redaction. The first author resorted to this narrative device only when he had good reasons for

⁴⁰ The retarding effect of the two-stage resurrection could have been achieved also without a personified Spirit, e.g. by repeating or splitting up the promise to the bones.

⁴¹ Refer to Chaps 4.2.2.5 and 6.6.3. Bartelmus, “Ez 37:1-14,” 386f. note 102 sees *קְרוּחַ* in the context of late-postexilic *Hypostasenspekulation* under Persian influence. Both the date and the hypostatic understanding of *קְרוּחַ* has been criticized by Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 178, 225f.

not having YHWH carry out a certain activity in person. Then, one or more delegate-characters with the specific purpose of assuming that task are brought in (the seven executioners; the measurer/guide). They appear when they are needed and disappear as soon as they have completed their mission. In accordance with their function, these delegates are not spectacular in appearance but much like ordinary human beings. The emphasis is on their equipment and on the task they have to fulfil.

By contrast, the vision of the Glory of YHWH, and subsequently the cherubim redaction, insert fantastic composite creatures that can perhaps be categorized as entourage: the living beings and the living cherubim serve YHWH and underline particular aspects, such as rulership, holiness, or mobility. They are inseparably connected to YHWH and do not seem to have a distinct personality. The radiant manlike figures in the same redactions (1:26c-27; 8:2-3b) are in actual effect anthropomorphic depictions of YHWH in person. Therefore, they are not really *intermediate* beings but straightforward representations of God.

The most intricate case is the personified Spirit in 37:9, in as much as its relation to YHWH remains obscure. Since the Spirit has divine qualities (ability to give life) but at the same time is distinct from YHWH, it would indeed appear as a kind of hypostasis.

The growing interest in, and variety of, intermediate creatures over time, even where there is no narrative or theodicean need, is indicative of a development toward an increasingly transcendent idea of God.

10. Conclusion

This diachronic study of the vision accounts in Ezekiel (1:1–3:15; 3:22–27; 8:1–11:25; 37:1–14; 40:1–43:11; 44:1–2, 4–6; 47:1–12) as interrelated narratives has resulted in significant findings in two areas. The first part established a unified redaction history of all vision accounts in their mutual relationship; the second part utilized this information to explore selected themes in the oldest versions of the visions and in their development during redaction.

10.1 *Summary of Results: Redaction Criticism*

10.1.1 Four Distinct Redaction Histories

All four major units of vision accounts (1:1–3:15; 8–11; 37:1–14; 40–48*) have undergone quite extensive redaction.

In Ezek 1:1–3:15, the connection between Ezek 1 and the following call narrative is not original. The original call narrative comprises 2:3–3:11*, 14c, 15*, a concentric composition (speech – vision – speech) with a short conclusion. The expansion through the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1, 3b–13, 22–28; 2:1–2; 3:12, 14abd) gives the account a new beginning and thus a new keynote; structurally it creates two vision accounts in sequence (vision – speech – vision – speech). The paragraph about the wheels (1:15–21) is a separate later addition. As for the short vision in 3:22–27, it is mainly a compilation of elements from both 2:3–3:15* and its expansion in the vision of the Glory of YHWH.

The present account of the first temple vision (Ezek 8–11) is a jigsaw puzzle of three independent texts and at least four redactions. Like a judgement prophecy the original vision account (8:1, 3cde, 5–7a, 9–18; 9:1–2*, 5–10*; 10:2, 4, 6–7*, 18a, 19d; 11:23–25) consists of a demonstration of guilt and an announcement of

judgement, enclosed by a narrative frame. Two originally independent disputation words, 11:3–4, 7–12 and 11:14–20*, were redacted, combined and inserted in this frame, thus providing a second, more hopeful climax. With a similar aim, the partial-judgement revision (9:2e, 3cd, 4, 5b [אַחֲרָיִי], 6b₁cb₂, 11) mitigates the sentence by excepting innocent citizens from the carnage. Extensive redactions in Ezek 10 (cherubim and wheels) complicate the account's structure but, by creating cross-references to Ezek 1, increase the book's coherence at the same time.

In the vision of the dry bones, 37:1–14, the original account includes 37:1–6, 7c–8d, 10c–12, 14. Narrating the revival of the bones, corresponding to its announcement, in one single act, the account is structured according to a scheme of promise – fulfilment – promise. The two-step resurrection in 37:7ab, 8e–10b, which also introduces the personalised *הָרוּחַ* as life-giving mediator (v. 9), is a redactional interpolation, as is also 37:13.

The analysis of Ezek 40–48 was limited to 40:1–43:12; 44:1–2, 4–6; 47:1–12. Largely concurring with Konkel, the original vision account was discerned in 40:1–2a*, 3b–13, 15–37, 47–49; 41:1–4; 42:15, 20b–e; 43:1–2, 4–10. It describes a perfectly symmetrical temple that, with its idealistic-impracticable proportions, is more a theological message than a building project. Then the Glory of YHWH returns from the east, thus mirroring its departure in 10:19; 11:23. On the other hand, the permanent closure of the east gate (44:1–2) and the vision of the river (47:1–10, 12) are late-exilic expansions, spelling out the healing and nurturing consequences of YHWH's presence. Probably in post-exilic times, a redactor compiled the mini-vision account in 44:4–5d, 6 as keynote to the law texts of Chapters 44–45.

10.1.2 One Interrelated Redaction History

Many results of the redaction-critical analysis concerning the vision accounts as distinct text units can be found somewhere in previous literature.¹ It is rare, however, apart from the commentaries, to find a study examining all of Ezekiel's visions.² To my knowledge, no recent publication looks specifically at the vision accounts as *interrelated* narratives from a diachronic perspective. This is what has been accomplished in the present thesis.

From the distinct redaction histories, one comprehensive redaction history of all vision accounts in Ezekiel was compiled, by establishing the chronological order of the layers and, as applicable, their correlation or dependence. Thus, the original vision accounts (2:3–3:15*; 8–11*; 37:1–14*; 40:1–43:10*) and the two disputation words (11:3–12*, 14–20*) are attributed to the early-exilic prophetic author (Ezekiel). The four vision accounts are originally arranged in two interlinked pairs: 8–11* and 40:1–43:10* have a common focus on the temple and on YHWH's presence; 2:3–3:15* and 37:1–14* share similarities to sign-acts. Conversely, 2:3–3:15* and 8–11* proclaim judgement while 37:1–14* and 40:1–43:10* announce restoration.

Shortly after Ezekiel's time, probably in a moment of failing trust in the restoration prophecies, the vision of the Glory of YHWH (1:1–2:2*; 3:12–14*) provides a new *overture* for the collection of the late prophet's writings, corroborating his message as well as YHWH's reliability. Furthermore it creates distinctive connections to 8–11* and 40–48*, in particular through imitating the

¹ See the notes in the respective sections of Chapters 2-5.

² There are two publications about Ezekiel's vision accounts with a diachronic methodology: firstly the monograph by Behrens, *Prophetische Visionsschilderungen*, which however looks at vision accounts in the OT in general, and with a mainly form-critical interest; moreover he omits the analysis of Ezek 40–48. Secondly, the article by Baumann, "Hauptvisionen Hesekiels" is over fifty years old and, due to its shortness, it conveys only an outline of Baumann's ideas, without having room for discussing them in any detail.

narrative frame of 8–11* and key terms like *מְרֵאוֹת אֱלֹהִים* and *כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה*. This new cycle of three *divine visions* leaves 37:1–14* somewhat isolated, whilst links between the other three vision accounts continue to increase in quantity and explicitness. For instance, the cherubim redaction merges the living beings of 1:5–26 with the temple cherubim in Ezek 10, thereby producing strong associations between the two chapters. The insertion of the wheels in 1:15–21 is subsequently copied into 10:9–17*. Additionally, the already solid correlation of the two counterpart temple visions (8–11*; 40–43*) is strengthened by allusions to 8–11* in the vision of the river (47:1–12).

Once the vision accounts have acquired their distinctive terminology, even abbreviated snippets suffice to construct redactional miniature “visions”. This occurred in probably post-exilic times with 3:22–27 and 44:4–6*. The former repeats phrases from the original call vision, the vision of the Glory of YHWH, and the location of the vision of the dry bones (*הַבְּקָעָה*) and merges it with material of its own, in order to create a smooth transition to the collection of sign-acts in Ezek 4–5. Equally, 44:4–6* copies mostly from 40:1–43:10* but also from 8–11* and probably 3:22–27, to produce a fitting introduction for the subsequent laws (44:7–46:20). In addition, (a) later redactor(s) introduces explicit references (3:23; 8:4; 10:13, 15, 20, 22; 43:3), which point anaphorically from one vision to another. Again, 37:1–14 remains excluded from this particular network.

In conclusion, the present tightly-knit network originates to a large extent from redaction. However, this process was encouraged by the fact that the vision accounts have always been interconnected and were designed to be read together.

10.2 Summary of Results: Theology

The unbroken interest of later generations in Ezekiel's visions, resulting in multilayered redaction and expansion, has left its marks in the tensions and fissures of the present accounts. At the same time, it testifies to their great theological potential. This thesis began by affirming the possibility, even the greater depth and accuracy, of a narrative-rhetorical and theological analysis of reconstructed historical text stages.³ Taking into consideration the heterogeneity of the present text and its historical development indeed enriches and elucidates interpretation; at least for clearly redacted texts such a reading has an advantage over one that remains on the present-text level.⁴ This thesis includes *three applications*, each focussing on different aspects of a diachronic interpretation of the visions.

The first explored the discourse of the original vision accounts. Although they are narrated throughout from the first-person perspective of the prophet (as is the book of Ezekiel in general), the true main character is YHWH. In fact, Ezekiel's renowned theocentricity finds expression even in the way the original accounts are narrated. YHWH's word takes up most of the space and determines the events. YHWH is the only fully-fledged character; in comparison, the prophet appears only as half-drawn, since his feelings and thoughts remain hidden and he hardly ever acts out of his own initiative. Usually, the only point of view on the ideological plane that is presented to the audience is that of YHWH (sometimes in contrast to that of Israel). The prophet-narrator's obedience and passive acceptance of YHWH's decrees stands in stark contrast to the rebellious House of Israel and represents the position the (historical) audience, too, is supposed to take. With the prophet-narrator, they are to "swallow" the hard-to-digest message that the dramatic experience of loss

³ Refer to Chap. 1.4.3.

⁴ The vast majority of biblical studies with theological, or content-oriented, focus use in fact a synchronic approach (see Literature Review, Chap. 1.2 note 24, for examples).

of their land, temple, political independence, and national pride occurred, not in spite of their God – but rather because of YHWH’s rejection. Ultimately they must accept nothing less than the annihilation of their collective identity insofar as it was based on their relationship to YHWH. Only after that can re-creation take place and open up a new future.

To this basic constellation of the original accounts, the redactions do not add new content; rather, some add their own particular emphasis. For instance, the vision of the Glory of YHWH conveys YHWH’s majesty in a way that decisively underlines his position as central character. By contrast, the redactional vision 3:22-27 represents the prophet-narrator as incapacitated to the point of creating a hindrance for the audience’s empathizing with him.

Second, based on these character portrayals, the focus turned upon one specific relationship: YHWH and the House of Israel. These two literary characters embody the author’s beliefs about God and humankind in general. Three theological and anthropological aspects, contained already in the original vision accounts, were touched upon. One is the continuity and contrast of YHWH’s destructive and restoring actions. YHWH’s concern for his own name is certainly the main element of continuity. Both judgement and restoration are aimed at averting the real or feared desecration of YHWH’s name. Yet the two acts, surely different for Israel, are also inherently different as regards YHWH. For it is by securing a future for Israel that YHWH demonstrates his being God, his being holy in the sense of infinitely-different-from-human. The rejection of Israel in retribution for their rejecting YHWH (8-11*) displays the same rationale for human and divine agents; only the divine means are more powerful. On the contrary, re-creating the people from their scattered remains, without preconditions (37:1-14*), and establishing a completely renewed socio-religious order (40:1-43:10*), is possible only to God. Hence, in

pinning all its hopes for deliverance on YHWH, Ezekielian theology achieves a double result: despite the historical experience and a pessimistic view on human reliability, it finds an unfailing reason for keeping faith. At the same time, and to the same effect, it glorifies YHWH to the maximum, by attributing to YHWH not only the greatest power (as exerted in the judgement) but – important for Ezekiel's priestly background – also supreme holiness, as expressed especially in the restoration.

Another aspect is of an anthropological nature: the negative outlook on the House of Israel; in particular on its capability to act rightfully. It is well-known that Ezekiel's view on Israel's sinfulness is more radical than that of other prophets: to him, idolatry and rebelliousness is the people's second nature (בְּיַת מְרִי). Due to their generations-long obstinacy, they have reached the point of being virtually unable to obey YHWH's commands (2:3-7; 3:7), or even to distinguish right from wrong (8:5-18). This view explains for instance the peculiarity in Ezekiel that the immediate reaction to the restoration is supposed to be feeling shame (43:10). Israel could not respond with shame to the punishment because it was unable to recognize its own wrongdoings prior to being re-created, i.e. being given a new רִיחַ (11:19) – YHWH's רִיחַ (37:14) – and experiencing YHWH's full divinity and holiness in the act of deliverance and restoration. Only when looking back at their past from a completely new standpoint, knowing how they should have been acting all along, can they see that they did wrong. They feel shame as they recognize the contrast between their previous behaviour and YHWH's holiness and his laws that they now have internalized.

Finally, as a consequence of these aspects, restoration becomes undeserved and unconditional. YHWH will save Israel regardless of their conduct in exile – at any event, in terms of their collective identity as YHWH's people, Israel is dead at that

point in time. The unmerited deliverance of the sinful nation for the sake of God's name can be circumscribed by the term "grace". There are similarities to Paul's notion of the justification of the individual sinner by grace alone, some six centuries later. This is not to say that Paul consciously referred to Ezekiel. Yet Ezekiel's theology – together with other exilic literature – gave origin to notions that evolved into tradition and were eventually available to Paul, for his own soteriology.

As mentioned, these topics, which would each merit a more detailed study, are present already in the original writings and therefore go back to "Ezekiel". The redactional layers contribute little regarding the relationship between YHWH and Israel. A generally more positive anthropology is implied by the partial-judgement revision in Ezek 9, as its idea of righteous citizens (9:4) indirectly concedes the ability of discerning right from wrong. A new issue is brought up by the insertion of the edited and combined disputation words, 11:1–21, namely the contraposition of the exiles and those who remained in the land. In the succession of 11:1–13, 14–21, YHWH denies the self-confident pretensions of those in the land (11:2-12) and, by contrast, aligns himself with the exiles, promising them return (11:16-17). Moreover, only they will be transformed (11:19); hence only the former exiles will constitute the future House of Israel (11:20).

Lastly, the third application focussed on the variety of intermediate characters – not divine but more than just human – as they appear in the vision accounts in diverse stages of their history. Both original temple visions have "men" (9:2), or "a man" (40:3), substituting YHWH where this is necessary for theological or narratological reasons. While these original delegate-characters are described only in view of their task, an increased interest in the intermediate characters as such becomes tangible in redactional layers; particularly with regard to the living beings in 1:5–26 and to the live cherubim in 10:1–11:22*. The eccentric composite creatures

are essentially symbols without proper personality; they emphasize particular aspects of YHWH, such as universal authority, holiness, and boundless presence. In addition, the cherubim have the primary book-editorial function of creating coherence by harmonizing the two visions (1:1-3:15 and 8-11). It is more difficult to define the connection between YHWH and the personified Spirit in 37:9, as *קְרוּבִים* is world-immanent and distinct from YHWH, but on the other hand has divine qualities, as it gives life. From this view it would seem that the redactor had a hypostasis in mind. Overall, the increasing appearance of various kinds of intermediate characters can be interpreted as symptomatic for a more and more transcendent idea of God.

10.3 Further Prospects and Desiderata

These narrative, theological, and anthropological themes have certainly been treated by other scholars,⁵ and in more depth, but usually without a diachronic dimension and not from the particular viewpoint of the visions. All of these topics deserve further reflection. In particular, it would be worthwhile to study more thoroughly the theological and anthropological aspects touched upon in Chapter 8: Ezekiel's view on the difference of God's punitive and God's saving action, human moral capability and divine grace, shame in consequence of salvation, and especially the Ezekielian version of "grace" (in comparison to neotestamentarian writings, and specifically to Paul). For this purpose, and in general, a redaction history of the entire

⁵ For example, on the literary character of "Ezekiel" and its function see Schöpflin, *Theologie als Biographie*; Patton, "Priest, Prophet, and Exile." A specifically rhetoric-critical study on Ezekiel is: Renz, *Rhetorical Function*. The correlation of judgement and restoration has been treated, with different outcome, by Luc, "Theology of Ezekiel"; Wong, "Profanation/Sanctification"; and Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Ultimate Aim of Israel's Restoration in Ezekiel," in *Birkat Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Eastern Literature, and Postbiblical Judaism*, ed. Chaim Cohen, Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008). Ezekiel's negative anthropology and matters of morality are discussed by Lapsley, *Can These Bones Live*; Mein, *Ethics of Exile*. The topic of shame, not only but also in Ezekiel, has been explored in depth by Stiebert, *Construction of Shame*. Carey C. Newman, *Paul's Glory-Christology: Tradition and Rhetoric*, NovTSup 69 (Leiden: Brill, 1992) studies the influence of Ezekiel on Paul with regard to Paul's christological use of *δόξα* (כְבוֹד). The concept of "grace" in Ezekiel is often mentioned (see notes in 8.1.3.4), but usually not considered in depth.

book of Ezekiel with all its interrelations, on which consensus can be reached, also remains a desideratum for further studies.

The more deeply we are able to understand the message Ezekiel and the redactors of his book left behind, the more we will be able to learn from them. The historical dimension and the socio-historical background are vital in this respect as, I suspect, we have an essential experience in common. Notwithstanding the temporal and cultural distance between us and the Babylonian Exile, also we are watching traditional, well-loved constructions and mindsets fall apart, which until recently conveyed social and religious meaning. Though this occurs in less violent ways, there is still no clear alternative ahead. Ezekiel's theocentricity may offend our anthropocentricity, and his negativity may affront our moral self-confidence. We may be repelled by the absolute condemnation of his own people, and his writings may always retain something foreign and impenetrable for us— but perhaps, despite all that, we may value his successful crisis management and be able to learn from it.⁶ The sixth century ultimately produced remarkable theological innovations.⁷ The question is whether we will draw from those old biblical writings insights and encouragement to overcoming our own post-modern kinds of crises.

⁶ “The Book of Ezekiel tells its own truths about God, about exile, and about society. These truths of the Book of Ezekiel cannot be our truths, but we can, as a matter of choice and intent, attempt to read the Book of Ezekiel as an expression of truths for the one or ones who wrote it. We can try to read this book as an attempt to answer questions which demand answers. Such an effort is an act of profound respect for the truth of another, even when these truths seem so different from our own. And when we are willing to read this book as truths for someone else, we create the possibility that this book might even speak truths to our own questions.” Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 2.

⁷ The Babylonian exile has aptly been called “one of the most fruitful crises in the history of ideas.” Mein, *Ethics of Exile*, 75.

Appendix A: The Text of Ezekiel 1:1-3:15 and 3:22-27

Textual-Critically Amended Hebrew Text	V.	English Translation Based on the NRSV ¹
וַיְהִי בַשְּׁלִישִׁים שָׁנָה בְּרַב־יַעֲי בְחַמְשָׁה לַחֹדֶשׁ וַאֲנִי בְּתוֹךְ-הַגּוֹלָה עַל-נְהַר-כְּבָר נִפְתְּחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וַאֲרָאָה מְרֵאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:	1:1a b c d	In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw divine visions
[בְּחַמְשָׁה לַחֹדֶשׁ הַיָּא הַשָּׁנָה הַחֲמִישִׁית לְגָלוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹיָכִין:]	2a b	[On the fifth day of the month - that is: in the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin.
(הָיָה) ² הָיָה דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי יְחִזְקִאל בֶּן-בוּזִי הַכֹּהֵן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּשָׂדִים עַל-נְהַר-כְּבָר וַתְּהִי <עָלַי> (שָׁם) ⁴ יַד-יְהוָה: ³	3a b	The word of YHWH came to Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of YHWH was upon <me> (there).
וַאֲרָא וַהֲיָה רוּחַ סְעָרָה בָּאָה מִן-הַצָּפוֹן עָנָן גָּדוֹל וָאֵשׁ מִתְּלַקַּחַת וְנֹגַהּ לוֹ סָבִיב וּמִתּוֹכָהּ כְּעֵין הַחֹשֶׁמֶל [מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ]:	4a b c d	As I looked, behold, a stormy wind coming out of the north, a great cloud, and fire taking hold of itself, and brightness was round about it, and from its middle, something like amber [from the middle of the fire].
וּמִתּוֹכָהּ דְמוֹת אַרְבַּע חַיּוֹת וְזֶה מִרְאֵיהֶן דְמוֹת אָדָם לָהֶנָּה:	5a b c	And from its middle: a likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: a human likeness was theirs,
וְאַרְבָּעָה פָּנִים לְאַחַת וְאַרְבַּע כַּנְפֵימָם לְאַחַת (לָהֶם):	6a b	but each had four faces, and each (of them) had four wings.
וְרַגְלֵיהֶם רַגְלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכַף רַגְלֵיהֶם כְּכַף רַגְלֵי עֵגֶל וְנֹצְצִים כְּעֵין נְחֹשֶׁת קָלִיל:	7a b c	Their legs were a straight leg, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; / and they sparkled like burnished bronze.
וַיְדִי ⁶ אֲדָם מִתַּחַת כַּנְפֵיהֶם עַל אַרְבַּעַת רַבְעֵיהֶם וּפְנֵיהֶם (וְכַנְפֵיהֶם) לְאַרְבַּעַתָּם:	8a b	And they had human hands under their wings on their four sides. And their faces (and their wings), of the four:
(חִבְּרָת אִשָּׁה אֶל-אֲחֹתָהּ כַּנְפֵיהֶם) לֹא-יִסְבּוּ בְּלִכְתָּן אִישׁ אֶל-עֵבֶר פָּנָיו יֵלְכוּ:	9a b c	(their wings touched one another;) they did not turn as they went; each went straight ahead.

¹ The translation is based on the text of the NRSV but changes have been made by me in almost every verse in order to remain as close as possible to the Hebrew wording and sentence structure.
² LXX και ἐγένετο does not presuppose a special emphasis as with the infinitive absolute (הָיָה הָיָה) in MT. It is possible that the original text did not have it; e.g. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 3f. Since this construction nevertheless occurs in other OT books (Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 41), the evidence is not clear.
³ MT: עָלַי.
⁴ As in other places throughout the book, LXX does not translate שָׁם, which is why Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 4 takes this word to be a later addition. Differently Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 4. It is equally possible that LXX neglected the word in order to straighten the flow of the sentence.
⁵ LXX translates: και τὰ σκέλη αὐτῶν ὀρθὰ και περωτοὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτῶν και σπινθηρες ὡς ἐξαστράπτων χαλκός και ἐλαφραὶ αἱ πτέρυγες αὐτῶν. LXX obviously misreads כַּף instead of כָּף. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 4f.
⁶ וַיְדִי = qere; with ibid., 5; and Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 94 note 27 preferable to kethib וַיְדִי.

<p>וּדְמוּת פְּנֵיהֶם פְּנֵי אָדָם וּפְנֵי אַרְיֵה אֶל־הַיָּמִין לְאַרְבַּעָתָם וּפְנֵי־שׁוֹר מִהַשְּׂמֹאל לְאַרְבַּעָתָם וּפְנֵי־נֶשֶׁר לְאַרְבַּעָתָם:</p>	<p>10a b c d</p>	<p>And the likeness of their faces were human faces; and the four had the face of a lion on the right side, and the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle.</p>
<p><⁸> וּכְנִפְיָהֶם פָּרְדוֹת מְלֻמָּעֵלָה לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּים הַכְּרוֹת אִישׁ וּשְׁתֵּים מְכַסּוֹת אֶת גּוֹיֹתֵיהֶנָּה:</p>	<p>11b c d</p>	<p>And their wings were spread out above; of each, two wings were touching each other, while two covered their bodies.</p>
<p>וְאִישׁ אֶל־עֵבֶר פָּנָיו יֵלְכוּ אֶל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה־שָׁמָּה הַרוּחַ לְלֶכֶת יֵלְכוּ לֹא יִסְבוּ בְּלֶכְתָּם:</p>	<p>12a b c d</p>	<p>And each went straight ahead; wherever the wind would go, they went, they did not turn as they went.</p>
<p>וּבִינֹת הַחַיּוֹת מְרֹאָה כְּגַחְלֵי־אֵשׁ בְּעֵרוֹת כְּמֹרָאָה הַלְּפָדִים [הִיא מִתְהַלֶּכֶת בֵּין הַחַיּוֹת] וְנִגְהָ לְאֵשׁ וּמִן־הָאֵשׁ יוֹצֵא בָרָק:</p>	<p>13a b c d e</p>	<p>And in the middle of the living creatures: an appearance like burning coals of fire; like an appearance of torches [it was moving to and fro among the living creatures] and the fire had brightness, and from the fire issued lightning.</p>
< ¹⁰ > <14>		
<p>וַאֲרָא¹¹ וַהֲנִה אֹפֶן אֶחָד בְּאַרְצָא אֶצֶל הַחַיּוֹת <לְאַרְבַּעָתָם>¹²:</p>	<p>15a b</p>	<p>And I looked, and behold, a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, for all four of them.</p>
<p>מְרֹאָה הָאוֹפָנִים (וּמַעֲשֵׂיהֶם) כְּעֵין תְּרִשִׁישׁ וּדְמוּת אֶחָד לְאַרְבַּעָתָם (וּמֹרָאֵיהֶם) וּמַעֲשֵׂיהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה הָאוֹפֶן בְּתוֹךְ הָאוֹפֶן:</p>	<p>16a b c</p>	<p>The appearance of the wheels (and their construction) was like beryl and all four had one likeness; (and their appearance) and their construction: as if a wheel were within a wheel.</p>
<p>עַל־אַרְבַּעַת רַבְעֵיהֶן בְּלֶכְתָּם יֵלְכוּ לֹא יִסְבוּ בְּלֶכְתָּם:</p>	<p>17a b</p>	<p>When they went, they went in any of their four directions; / they did not turn as they went.</p>
<p>וּגְבִיהֶן וְגִבָּה לָהֶם <וַאֲרָא>¹³ לָהֶם וּגְבֹתָם מְלֵאת עֵינַיִם סָבִיב לְאַרְבַּעָתָם:</p>	<p>18a_p a b c</p>	<p>Their rims, they were tall and I looked at them /and they were fearsome (?); and their rims of all four were full of eyes all around.</p>
<p>וּבְלֶכֶת הַחַיּוֹת יֵלְכוּ הָאוֹפָנִים אֶצְלָם וּבַהֲנִשָּׂא הַחַיּוֹת מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ יִנְשְׂאוּ הָאוֹפָנִים:</p>	<p>19a b</p>	<p>And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose.</p>
<p>עַל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה־שָׁם הַרוּחַ לְלֶכֶת יֵלְכוּ (שָׁמָּה הַרוּחַ לְלֶכֶת) וְהָאוֹפָנִים יִנְשְׂאוּ לְעַמְתָּם כִּי רוּחַ הַחַיּוֹת בְּאוֹפָנֵיהֶם:</p>	<p>20a b c d</p>	<p>Wherever the wind would go, they went (wherever the wind would go), and the wheels rose at their side; / for the spirit of the living being/of life was in the wheels.</p>

⁷ LXX omits v. 9a. According to Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 41; and Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 94 note 30, the MT preserves the original. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 5 prefers LXX as the *lectio brevior*. See the hypothetical explanation in van Dyke Parunak, “Structural Studies,” 125f.

⁸ Following LXX. MT adds v. 11a וּפְנֵיהֶם but the word is not integrated in the sentence structure.

⁹ MT reads ... וּדְמוּת הַחַיּוֹת מְרֹאָהֶם.

¹⁰ MT: “The living creatures darted to and fro, like a flash of lightning.”

¹¹ MT: ... וַאֲרָא הַחַיּוֹת וַהֲנִה.

¹² MT has ... לְאַרְבַּעַת פְּנָיו. Prefer LXX with Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 16; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 6; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 47.

¹³ MT of 1:18ab: וּגְבִיהֶן וְגִבָּה לָהֶם וַאֲרָא לָהֶם. For discussion, refer to Chap. 2.1.2.

בְּלָכְתָם יָלְכוּ וּבְעִמְדָם יַעֲמִדוּ וּבַהֲנִשְׂאָם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ יִנְשְׂאוּ (הָאוֹפָנִים) לְעַמְתָם כִּי רוּחַ הַחַיָּה בְּאוֹפָנִים:	21a b c d	When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those rose from the earth, (the wheels) rose along with them; / for the spirit of the living creature/of life was in the wheels.
וְדַמּוּת עַל־רֵאשֵׁי הַחַיָּה רָקִיעַ כְּעֵין הַקֶּרֶחַ (הַנּוֹרָא) נָטוּי עַל־רֵאשֵׁיהֶם ¹⁴ מִלְמַעְלָה:	22	and a likeness over the heads of the living creature, of a dome, like (dreadful) crystal, spread out above their heads.
וְתַחַת הֶרְקִיעַ כְּנִפְיָהֶם יִשְׂרוּת אִשָּׁה אֶל־אֲחֹתָהּ [לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּים מְכַסּוֹת לְהִנָּה אֵת גְּוִיתֵיהֶם:] ¹⁵	23a bc	And under the dome their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another; [and each had two covering its body.]
וְאֶשְׁמַע אֶת־קוֹל כְּנִפְיָהֶם כְּקוֹל מַיִם רַבִּים (כְּקוֹל־שִׂדִי) בְּלָכְתָם (קוֹל הַמְּלָאָה כְּקוֹל מַחֲנֶה) בְּעִמְדָם תִּרְפְּינָה כְּנִפְיָהֶן:	24a b	And I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, (like the sound of Almighty) when they went (a sound of tumult like the sound of a camp). When they stood, they let down their wings.
וַיְהִי־קוֹל מֵעַל לְרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֵאשָׁם ¹⁶ < ¹⁷ >	25a b	And there was a voice/sound from above the dome that was over their heads;
(וּמִמַּעַל לְרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֵאשָׁם) כְּמֵרְאָה אֶבֶן־סַפִּיר דְּמוּת כֶּסֶא וְעַל דְּמוּת הַכֶּסֶא דְּמוּת כְּמֵרְאָה אָדָם עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה:	26a ₁ b a ₂ c	(And from above the dome that was over their heads): an appearance like sapphire, a likeness of a throne; and on the likeness of a throne: a likeness as it were of a human form was on it, from above.
וַאֲרָא כְּעֵין חֲשָׁמַל < ¹⁸ > מִמֵּרְאָה מִתְּנִי וּלְמַעְלָה וּמִמֵּרְאָה מִתְּנִי וּלְמַטָּה רָאִיתִי כְּמֵרְאָה־אֵשׁ וְנִגְהָ לוֹ סָבִיב:	27a b c	And I saw like gleaming amber upward from what had the appearance of his loins; and downward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw an appearance like fire, and brightness was around him.
כְּמֵרְאָה הַקֶּשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בְּעָנָן בְּיוֹם הַגֶּשֶׁם כֵּן מֵרְאָה הַנִּגְהָ סָבִיב הוּא מֵרְאָה דְּמוּת כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה	28a _p b a c	Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the brightness around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of YHWH.
וַאֲרָאָה וַאֲפַל עַל־פָּנַי וַאֲשַׁמַּע קוֹל מְדַבֵּר: ס	28d e f	And I saw it, and I fell on my face, and I heard a voice speaking.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּוַדְּמַי עֲמֵד עַל־רַגְלֶיךָ וְאֶדְבַר אִתְּךָ:	2:1a b c	And he said to me, “Son of man, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you.”
וַתְּבֹא בִי רוּחַ (כְּאֲשֶׁר דְּבַר אֵלַי) וַתַּעֲמִדְנִי עַל־רַגְלִי וַאֲשַׁמַּע אֵת מְדַבֵּר אֵלַי: פ	2a b c d	And a spirit entered into me (while he [= the voice] was speaking to me,) and it [= the spirit] set me on my feet; and I heard someone speaking to me.

¹⁴ LXX has ἐπὶ τῶν πτερύγων (over their wings). Although not impossible, this is likely to be a scribal error.

¹⁵ MT: לְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּים מְכַסּוֹת לְהִנָּה / וּלְאִישׁ שְׁתֵּים מְכַסּוֹת לְהִנָּה אֵת גְּוִיתֵיהֶם.

¹⁶ LXX καὶ ἰδοὺ seems to indicate וַיְהִי instead of וַיְהִי in the Hebrew Vorlage (Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 20, 28; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 51; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 8; Brownlee, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 9). However, in this vision, וַיְהִי usually does not occur without previous וַאֲרָא. Perhaps LXX translated freely.

¹⁷ 1:25c MT: בְּעִמְדָם תִּרְפְּינָה כְּנִפְיָהֶן.

¹⁸ MT: ... וַאֲרָא כְּעֵין חֲשָׁמַל כְּמֵרְאָה־אֵשׁ בֵּית־לָהּ סָבִיב מִמֵּרְאָה מִתְּנִי.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי	3a	And he said to me,
בְּנוֹאָדָם שׁוֹלַח אֲנִי אוֹתְךָ	b	“Son of man, I am sending you to the <house>
אֶל-<בֵּית> יִשְׂרָאֵל <הַמּוֹרְדִים> ¹⁹	c	of Israel, the rebels,
אֲשֶׁר מָרְדוּ-בִי	d	who have rebelled against me;
הֵמָּה וְאֲבוֹתָם (פָּשְׁעוּ בִי)	d	they and their ancestors (have transgressed
עַד-עַצְמָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:	d	against me) to this very day.
(וְהַבְּנִים קָשִׁי פָּנִים וְחַזְקֵי-לֵב	4a	(The descendants are impudent and stubborn.
אֲנִי שׁוֹלַח אוֹתְךָ אֲלֵיהֶם) ²⁰	b	I am sending you to them,)
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם	c	and you shall say to them,
כֹּה אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה:	d	‘Thus says (the Lord) YHWH.’
וְהֵמָּה	5ap	And they,
אִם-יִשְׁמְעוּ	a	whether they hear
וְאִם-יִקְדְּלוּ	b	or refuse to hear
כִּי בֵית מְרִי הֵמָּה	c	—for they are a rebellious house—
וְיָדְעוּ	d	they shall know
כִּי נִבְיָא הָיָה בְתוֹכָם: פ	e	that there has been a prophet among them.
וְאַתָּה בְּנוֹאָדָם אֶל-תִּירָא מֵהֶם	6a	And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them,
וּמִדְבָרֵיהֶם אֶל-תִּירָא	b	and do not be afraid of their words,
כִּי סְרָבִים וְסַלּוֹנִים אוֹתְךָ	c	though briars and thorns surround you
וְאֶל-עַקְרָבִים אַתָּה יוֹשֵׁב	d	and you live among scorpions;
מִדְבָרֵיהֶם אֶל-תִּירָא	e	do not be afraid of their words,
וּמִפְנֵיהֶם אֶל-תִּחַת	f	and do not be dismayed at their looks,
כִּי בֵית מְרִי הֵמָּה:	g	for they are a rebellious house.
וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֶת-דְּבָרַי אֲלֵיהֶם	7a	And you shall speak my words to them,
אִם-יִשְׁמְעוּ	b	whether they hear
וְאִם-יִקְדְּלוּ	c	or refuse to hear;
כִּי מְרִי הֵמָּה: פ ²¹	d	for they are rebellious.
וְאַתָּה בְּנוֹאָדָם שְׁמַע	8a	But you, son of man, hear
אֶת אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ	b	what I say to you;
אֶל-תִּהְיֶי-מְרִי כְּבֵית הַמְרִי	c	do not be rebellious like that rebellious house;
פִּצֵּה פִּיךָ	d	open your mouth,
וְאָכַל	e	and eat
אֶת אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי נֹתֵן אֵלֶיךָ:	f	what I give you.”
וַאֲרָאָה	9a	And I looked,
וְהִנֵּה-יָד שְׁלֹחָה אֵלַי	b	and behold, a hand was stretched out to me,
וְהִנֵּה-בּוֹ מְגִלַת-סֵפֶר:	c	and behold, a written scroll was in it;
וַיִּפְרֹשׂ אוֹתָהּ לִפְנָי	10a	and he spread it before me;
וְהִיא כְּתוּבָה פָּנִים וְאָחֹר	b	and it had writing on the front and on the back,
וְכָתוּב אֲלֶיהָ קִנּוּיִם וְהִגָּה וְהִי: ס	c	and written on it: lamentations, mourning and woe.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי	3:1a	And he said to me,
בְּנוֹאָדָם	b ₁	“Son of man,
(אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תִּמְצָא	c	(what you find,
אֹכֹל) ²²	b ₂	eat;)
אֹכֹל אֶת-הַמְּגִלָּה הַזֹּאת	d	eat this scroll,
וְלֵךְ	e	and go,
דַּבֵּר אֶל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל:	f	speak to the House of Israel.”

¹⁹ MT: שׁוֹלַח אֲנִי אוֹתְךָ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יְהוָה (see 2.1.3).

²⁰ 2:4ab is missing in LXX; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 9.

²¹ Some Hebrew manuscripts add בֵּית before מְרִי, but its omission seems to be deliberate; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 66.

²² LXX leaves out 3:1cb₂. Since the sentence type *x-yiqtol* does not fit in the form-critical scheme (see Chap.1.3), the phrase could in fact be an addition.

וַאֲפָתַח אֶת־פִּי וַיֵּאֲכֹלֵנִי אֶת הַמְּגִלָּה (הַזֹּאת):	2a b	So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the (this) scroll to eat.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּן־אָדָם בִּטְנֶךָ תֹאכַל וּמַעֲיֵךְ תִּמְלֵא אֶת הַמְּגִלָּה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן אֵלֶיךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ וַתְּהִי בְּפִי כַדְבֵּשׁ לְמִתּוֹק: פ	3a b c d e f	And he said to me, “Son of man, make your belly eat and fill your stomach with this scroll, that I give you.” And I ate it; and it became in my mouth as sweet as honey.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּן־אָדָם לֵךְ־ בֵּא אֶל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְדַבַּרְתָּ בְּדִבְרֵי אֱלֹהִים:	4a b c d	And he said to me, “Son of man, go, come to the House of Israel, and you shall speak my words to them.
כִּי לֹא אֶל־עַם עִמְקֵי שְׂפָה (וְכַבְּדֵי לְשׁוֹן) אֶתָּה שְׁלוּחַ [אֶל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל]:	5	For you are not sent to a people of obscure speech (and difficult language), [but to the House of Israel]—
לֹא אֶל־עַמִּים רַבִּים ²³ > אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִשְׁמַע דְּבָרֵיהֶם אִם־לֹא אֶל־יָהּ שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ הֲמָה יִשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֶיךָ:	6a b c d	not to many peoples, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to them, they would listen to you.
וּבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִאֱבֹד לְשִׁמְעַתְּ אֵלֶיךָ כִּי־אֵינָם אֹבִיִּם לְשִׁמְעַתְּ אֵלַי כִּי כָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲזָקֵי־מִצַּח וְקָשִׁי־לֵב הֵמָּה:	7a b c	But the House of Israel will not listen to you; for they are not willing to listen to me; for all the House of Israel, they have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart.
הִנֵּה נִתַּתִּי אֶת־פְּנֵיךָ חֲזָקִים לְעַמֹּת פְּנֵיהֶם וְאֶת־מִצְחֶךָ חֲזָק לְעַמֹּת מִצְחָם: ²⁴	8	Behold, I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their foreheads.
כְּשֹׁמֵר ²⁵ חֲזָק מִצַּר נִתַּתִּי מִצְחֶךָ לֹא־תִירָא אוֹתָם וְלֹא־תַחַת מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי בֵית־מְרִי הֵמָּה: פ	9a b c d	Like stone, harder than flint have I made your forehead; / do not fear them and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house.”
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּן־אָדָם אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי אֲשֶׁר אֲדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ קַח בְּלִבְךָ וּבְאָזְנוֹיךָ שְׁמַע:	10a b ₁ c b ₂ d	And he said to me, “Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears.
וְלֵךְ בֵּא אֶל־הַגּוֹלָה אֶל־בְּנֵי עַמְּךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה אִם־יִשְׁמְעוּ וְאִם־יִקְדְּלוּ:	11a b c d e f g	Then go, come to the exiles, to your people, and you shall speak to them and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says (the Lord) YHWH’; whether they hear or refuse to hear.”
וַתִּשְׂאֲנֵי רוּחַ וַאֲשִׁמַּע אַחֲרַי קוֹל רַעַשׁ גָּדוֹל <בְּרוֹם> ²⁶ כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה מִמְּקוֹמוֹ:	12a b c	Then a spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the sound of loud rumbling, as the Glory of YHWH rose from its place;

²³ MT: לא אל־עמים רבים עמקי שפה וכבדי לשון.

²⁴ The reason for LXX's *veikós* (victory, power) instead of *מצחה* (forehead) is obscure. Perhaps the translator did not understand the word; Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 40.

²⁵ LXX translates *διὰ παντός*, probably confusing *כשמיר* and *ותמיד*; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 12.

²⁶ Conjecture; MT: ברוף כבוד־יהוה ממקומו. Refer to 2.1.3.

<p>וְקוֹל כַּנְּפֵי הַחַיּוֹת מְשִׁיקוֹת אִשָּׁה אֶל־אֶחֻתָּהּ וְקוֹל הָאוֹפְנִים לְעִמְתָּם [וְקוֹל רֵעֵשׁ (גְּדוֹל):]</p>	13	[and the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a (loud) rumbling.]
<p>וְרוּחַ נִשְׂאָתָנִי וַתִּקְחָנִי וְאֶלֶךְ (מַר) בְּחַמַּת רוּחִי יַד־יְהוָה עָלַי חֲזָקָה:</p>	14a b c d	And a spirit had lifted me up and it took me away, and I went (bitter) in the heat of my spirit/mind, the hand of YHWH being strong upon me;
<p>וְאָבֹא אֶל־הַגּוֹלָה תַּל אַבִּיב²⁷ [הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶל־נְהַר־כְּבָר וְ] אֲשֶׁר הָמָּה יוֹשְׁבִים שָׁם²⁸ וְאָשַׁב שָׁם שְׁבַעַת יָמִים מְשֻׁמִּים בְּתוֹכָם:</p>	15a b c	and I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, [who lived by the river Chebar, and] where they were living. And I sat there for seven days, stunned, among them.

<p>וַתְּהִי עָלַי שָׁם יַד־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי קוּם צֵא אֶל־הַבְּקָעָה וְשָׁם אֲדַבֵּר אִתְּךָ:</p>	3:22a b c d e	And the hand of YHWH was upon me there; and he said to me, Rise up, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you.
<p>וַאֲקוּם וְאֵצֵא אֶל־הַבְּקָעָה וַהֲנֵה־שָׁם כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה עֹמֵד כְּכָבוֹד אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי עַל־נְהַר־כְּבָר וְאָפַל עַל־פָּנָי:</p>	23a b c d e	So I rose up and went out into the valley; and behold: there stood the Glory of YHWH, like the glory / that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face.
<p>וַתְּבֹא־בִי רוּחַ וַתַּעֲמֵדְנִי עַל־רַגְלִי וַיְדַבֵּר אֵתִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בֹּא הִסָּגֵר בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתְךָ:</p>	24a b c d e f	A spirit entered into me, and it set me on my feet; and he spoke with me and said to me: Go, shut yourself inside your house.
<p>[וְאַתָּה בְּנֵי־אָדָם הִנֵּה נָתַנּוּ עָלֶיךָ עֲבוֹתִים וְאָסְרוּךְ בָּהֶם] וְלֹא תֵצֵא בְּתוֹכָם:</p>	25a _p a b c	[As for you, son of man, behold, they placed cords on you, and they bound you with them,] ²⁹ so that you cannot go out among them;
<p>וְלִשׁוֹנְךָ אֲדַבֵּיק אֶל־חִכְךָ וְנִאֲלַמְתָּ וְלֹא־תִהְיֶה לָּהֶם לְאִישׁ מוֹכִיחַ כִּי בֵית מְרִי הֵמָּה:</p>	26a b c d	and your tongue I will make cling your palate, and you will be speechless so that you cannot be for them a reprover; for they are a rebellious house.
<p>וּבְדַבְּרֵי אוֹתְךָ אֶפְתַּח אֶת־פִּיךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה הַשְׁמַע יִשְׁמַע וְהִקְדַּל יִקְדַּל כִּי בֵית מְרִי הֵמָּה: ס</p>	27a b c d e f g	But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, “Thus says the Lord YHWH”; let those who hear, hear; and let those who refuse, refuse; for they are a rebellious house.

²⁷ LXX does not recognize תַּל אַבִּיב as a name and therefore tries to translate it by μετέωρος καὶ περιήλθον, “I came to the exiles *through the air*, and I went around...”

²⁸ Some manuscripts of S omit 3:15b while LXX represents it asyndetically.

²⁹ The uncalled-for change in subject (“they”) and tempus (past tense sentence forms *x-qatal* and *wayyiqtol*) suggests that 25a_p-b might be an even later gloss to the account.

Appendix B: The Text of Ezekiel 8-11

<p>וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁשִׁית בַּשְּׁשִׁי בְחַמְשָׁה לַחֹדֶשׁ אָנִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּבֵיתִי וְזִקְנֵי יְהוּדָה יוֹשְׁבִים לִפְנֵי וַתִּפֹּל עָלַי (שָׁם) יַד (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה:</p>	<p>8:1a b c d</p>	<p>In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, and the elders of Judah were sitting before me, the hand of (the Lord) YHWH fell upon me (there).</p>
<p>וְאָרָאָה וַהֲגִהָ דְמוּת כְּמֵרְאָה-²אִישׁ מִ(מֵרְאָה) מִתְּנִי וּלְמִטָּה אֵשׁ וּמִמִּתְּנִי וּלְמַעְלָה (כְּמֵרְאָה-זוֹהָר) כְּעֵיִן הַחֹשֶׁמְלֵה:</p>	<p>2a b c d</p>	<p>And I looked, and, behold, a likeness with the appearance of a <man>; below (the appearance of) his loins it was fire, and above his loins it was (like the appearance of brilliance,) like the gleam of amber.</p>
<p>וַיִּשְׁלַח תְּבֻנִית יָד וַיִּקְחֵנִי בְּצִיצַת רֹאשִׁי וַתִּשָּׂא אֹתִי רוּחַ בֵּין-הָאָרֶץ וּבֵין הַשָּׁמַיִם וַתְּבֵא אֹתִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם כְּמֵרְאֹת אֱלֹהִים אֶל-פֶּתַח שַׁעַר ³< > הַפּוֹנֶה צְפוֹנָה אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם (מוֹשֵׁב) סִמָּל הַקְּנָאָה (הַמְּקַנָּה):⁴</p>	<p>3a b c d e</p>	<p>He stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and a spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in divine visions to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the <> gateway that faces north, where (the seat of) the image of jealousy is, (which provokes to jealousy).</p>
<p>וַהֲגִהָ-שָׁם כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל⁵ כְּמֵרְאָה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי בְּבִקְעָה:</p>	<p>4a b</p>	<p>And behold, the Glory of the God of Israel, like the vision that I had seen in the valley.</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּן-אָדָם שֵׂא-נָא עֵינֶיךָ דָרָךְ צְפוֹנָה וְאָשָׂא עֵינֵי דָרְךָ צְפוֹנָה וַהֲגִהָ מִצְפוֹן לְשַׁעַר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ⁶ (סִמָּל הַקְּנָאָה הַזֶּה בְּבִקְעָה):</p>	<p>5a b c d</p>	<p>Then he said to me, “Son of man, now lift up your eyes toward north.” So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold, north of the altar gate, (in the entrance, was this image of jealousy).</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּן-אָדָם הֲרָאָה אַתָּה מָהֵם עֹשִׂים תּוֹעֵבוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת (אֲשֶׁר בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל) עֹשִׂים פֹּה לְרַחֲקָה מֵעַל מִקְדָּשִׁי וְעוֹד תִּשׁוּב תִּרְאֶה תּוֹעֵבוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת: ס</p>	<p>6a b c d e f g</p>	<p>And he said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that (the House of Israel) are committing here, to drive me far from my sanctuary? Yet you will see still greater abominations.”</p>
<p>וַיִּבֵּא אֹתִי אֶל-פֶּתַח הַחֲצָר ⁷< ></p>	<p>7a</p>	<p>And he brought me to the entrance of the court;</p>

¹ LXX has ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ μηνί (in the fifth month), which is explicable as assimilation to the subsequent “fifth day of the month”; hence the MT is to be preferred. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 89; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 276.

² Amended according to LXX. MT: וַהֲגִהָ דְמוּת כְּמֵרְאָה-אִישׁ.

³ MT: הַפּוֹנֶה צְפוֹנָה.

⁴ LXX and S seem to presuppose only one form of קנאה / קנה. “Sind von Anfang an Wahllesarten?” Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 192 – or is the duplication in MT meant to reinforce the expression?

⁵ LXX confuses here the two titles כְּבוֹד-יְהוָה and כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל and reads δόξα κυρίου θεοῦ Ἰσραηλ. Ibid., 192; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 277.

⁶ LXX translates ἐπὶ τὴν πύλην τὴν πρὸς ἀνατολάς (east instead of altar) and does not witness for the rest of the verse. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 192 is in favour of MT.

⁷ 8:7bc MT: וַאֲרָאָה וַהֲגִהָ הִרְאָהוּד בְּקִיר. “I looked, and behold, there was a hole in the wall.”

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּנֵי־אָדָם חֲתַרְנָא (בְּקִיר) וְאַחֲתַר (בְּקִיר) וְהִנֵּה פֶתַח אֶחָד:</p>	<p>8a b c d</p>	<p>And he said to me, “Son of man, dig (through the wall);” and when I dug (through the wall), behold, there was an entrance.</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בֹּא וּרְאֵה אֶת־הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת (הַרְעוֹת) אֲשֶׁר הֵם עֹשִׂים פֹּה:</p>	<p>9a b c d</p>	<p>And he said to me, “Go in, and see the (vile) abominations that they are committing here.”</p>
<p>וָאָבֹא וָאֲרָאָה וְהִנֵּה כָל־ (תַּבְּנִית רֶמֶשׂ וּבְהֵמָה) שְׁקִץ וְכָל־גִּלּוּלֵי בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל מְחֻקָּה עַל־הַקִּיר סָבִיב סָבִיב:</p>	<p>10a b c</p>	<p>And I went in and looked; and behold, all (forms of creeping things and) loathsome (animals,) and all the idols of the House of Israel were on the wall all around.</p>
<p>וְשִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזְקְנֵי בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּאָזְנִיחוּ בְּנֵי־שָׁפָן עִמָּד בְּתוֹכְכֶם (עֹמְדִים) לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאִישׁ מִקְטָרְתּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וַעֲתַר (עֲנַן־)הַקְטָרֶת עֹלָה:</p>	<p>11a₁ b a₂ c d</p>	<p>And seventy men, elders of the House of Israel, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them, (stood) before them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the fragrant (cloud of) incense was ascending.</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲרֵאִיתָ בְּנֵי־אָדָם אֲשֶׁר זָקְנֵי בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹשִׂים (בַּחֹשֶׁךְ) אִישׁ בְּחֻדְרֵי מִשְׁכַּבְתּוֹ כִּי אֹמְרִים אֵין יְהוָה רֹאֵה (אֲתָנוּ) עֹזֵב יְהוָה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ:</p>	<p>12a b c d e f</p>	<p>Then he said to me, “Have you seen, son of man, what the elders of the House of Israel are doing (in the dark), each in his room of images? For they say, ‘YHWH does not see (us), YHWH has forsaken the land’.”</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי עוֹד תָּשׁוּב תִּרְאֶה תּוֹעֵבוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־הֵמָּה עֹשִׂים:</p>	<p>13a b c d</p>	<p>And he said to me, “You will see still greater abominations that they are committing.”</p>
<p>וַיִּבֵּא אֹתִי אֶל־פֶּתַח שַׁעַר בֵּית־יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אֶל־הַצָּפוֹנָה וְהִנֵּה־שָׁם הַנְּשִׂים יֹשְׁבוֹת מְבַכּוֹת אֶת־הַתְּמוּזִ: ס</p>	<p>14a b c d</p>	<p>Then he brought me to the entrance of the gate of the house of YHWH that faces toward the north; and behold, women were sitting there, weeping for Tammuz.</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲרֵאִיתָ בְּנֵי־אָדָם עוֹד תָּשׁוּב תִּרְאֶה תּוֹעֵבוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת מֵאֵלֶּה:</p>	<p>15a b c d</p>	<p>Then he said to me, “Have you seen, son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these.”</p>
<p>וַיִּבֵּא אֹתִי אֶל־חֲצַר בֵּית־יְהוָה הַפְּנִימִית וְהִנֵּה־פֶתַח הַיֵּכָל יְהוָה בֵּין הָאוּלָּם וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ <כְּעֶשְׂרִים>⁸ אִישׁ אֲחֵרֵיהֶם אֶל־הַיֵּכָל יְהוָה וּפְנֵיהֶם קִדְמָה וְהֵמָּה מִשְׁתַּחֲוִיִּתִם (קִדְמָה) לְשֶׁמֶשׁ:</p>	<p>16a b c d e</p>	<p>And he brought me into the inner court of the house of YHWH; / and behold, at the entrance of the temple of YHWH, between the porch and the altar: about <twenty> men, their backs to the temple of YHWH, and their faces toward the east, and they were prostrating themselves (eastward) to the sun.</p>

⁸ MT: “about 25 men.”

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הֲרֹאִיתָ בֶן־אָדָם הֲנִקַּל לְבַיִת יְהוּדָה מַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת אֲשֶׁר עֲשׂוּ־פֹה כִּי־מָלְאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ חֶמֶס (וַיִּשְׂבוּ לְהַכְעִיֵּסֵנִי) ⁹ וְהֵנִם שֹׁלְחִים אֶת־הַזָּמֹרָה אֶל־אָפֶם: ¹⁰	17a b c d e f g	And he said to me, “Have you seen, son of man? Is it not bad enough that the house of Judah commits the abominations, which they commit here? Must they fill the land with violence, (and provoke my anger still further)? See, they are putting the branch to their nose.
וְגַם־אֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה בְחַמָּה לֹא־תַחֲסֹם עֵינַי וְלֹא אֶחַמֵּל וְקָרְאוּ בְּאָזְנֵי קוֹל גָּדוֹל וְלֹא אֲשָׁמַע אוֹתָם:	18a b c d e	Therefore I will act in wrath; my eye will not spare, and I will not have pity; and they will cry in my hearing with a loud voice, / but I will not listen to them.”
וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי קוֹל גָּדוֹל לֵאמֹר קָרְבוּ פְקָדוֹת הָעִיר וְאִישׁ כְּלִי מִשְׁחַתּוֹ בְּיָדוֹ:	9:1a b c	And he cried in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, “Draw near, you executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.”
וְהִנֵּה שֵׁשׁ אַנְשִׁים בָּאִים מִדְרָד־שַׁעַר הָעֶלְיוֹן אֲשֶׁר מִפְּנֵה צָפוֹנָה וְאִישׁ כְּלִי מִפְּצוֹ בְּיָדוֹ וְאִישׁ־אֶחָד בְּתוֹכָם לְבָשׁ בְּדָיִם [וְקִסַּת הַסֹּפֵר בְּמִתְנָיו] וַיָּבֹאוּ וַיַּעֲמְדוּ אֶצְלֵ מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת:	2a b c d e f g	And behold, six men coming from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand, and among them was one man clothed in linen, [and with a writer’s case at his loins.] And they came and stood beside the bronze altar.
וַיִּכְבֹּד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נִעְלָה מֵעַל הַכְּרוּב אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עָלָיו אֶל מִפְתַּן הַבַּיִת [וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־הָאִישׁ הַלְּבָשׁ הַבְּדָיִם אֲשֶׁר קִסַּת הַסֹּפֵר בְּמִתְנָיו: ס	3a ₁ b a ₂ c d	Now the Glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house; [and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writer’s case at his loins.
וַיֹּאמֶר < ¹¹ אֵלוֹ עָבַר בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר > בְּתוֹךְ <רוּשָׁלַם> וְהִתְנִיחַ תּוֹ עַל־מִצְחֹת הָאֲנָשִׁים הַנֹּאֲנָחִים וְהִנְאָנְקִים עַל כָּל־הַתּוֹעֵבוֹת הַנַּעֲשׂוֹת בְּתוֹכָהּ:]	4a b c	And <he> said to him, “Go through the city, <through Jerusalem,> and put a <i>taw</i> on the foreheads of those who sigh and groan over all the abominations committed in it.”]

⁹ This clause's originality is doubted by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 195 but defended by Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 100; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 297.

¹⁰ The versions propose diverse interpretations for this phrase; for example, LXX reads καὶ ἰδοὺ αὐτοὶ ὡς μὴ καταπίζοντες. Other variants are listed in Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 103. The variation is due to the fact that the meaning of 8:17g is, and obviously was already in ancient times, uncertain. For the same reason the question cannot be decided.

¹¹ MT: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלוֹ. Since the *nomen sacrum* is missing in LXX, and its occurrence in MT is quite unusual (וַיֹּאמֶר most often refers implicitly to YHWH), this is treated as a gloss by many commentators. According to Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 85; and Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 106, MT adds “YHWH” to be more explicit. Alternatively, since 9:4 is part of a later redaction, as discussed in Chap. 3.2.2, the irregularity could be explained by redaction criticism.

<p>וּלְאֵלֶּהָ אָמַר בְּאָזְנִי עָבְרוּ בְּעִיר [אֶתְרִי] וְהָכּוּ אֶל־תַּחֲסֵי עֵינֵיכֶם וְאַל־תַּחְמְלוּ:</p>	<p>5a b c d e</p>	<p>And to them he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city [after him,] and kill; your eye shall not spare, and you shall not have pity;</p>
<p>זָקֵן וְבָחוּר וּבְתוּלָה וְנָרְוָה וְנָשִׁים תַּהַרְגוּ לְמִשְׁחֵת [וְעַל־כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָלָיו הַתּוֹ אֶל־תִּגְשׁוּ] וּמִמִּקְדָּשִׁי תַחֲלוּ וַיִּחְלוּ בְּאֲנָשִׁים (הַזְּקֵנִים) אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי הַבַּיִת:</p>	<p>6a b₁ c b₂ d e f</p>	<p>old men, young men and young women, little children and women you shall cut down to destroy them, [but everyone on whom is the mark, you shall not touch.] And begin at my sanctuary.” So they began with the men, (the elders) who were in front of the house.</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם טַמְאוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת וּמִלְאוּ אֶת־הַתְּצִרוֹת¹³ חֲלָלִים צֵאוּ <וְהָכּוּ>¹⁴ בְּעִיר:</p>	<p>7a b c d f</p>	<p>Then he said to them, “Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out <and kill> in the city.”</p>
<p>וַיְהִי כִּהְכוּתָם (וַיֵּשְׂאֵר אָנִי)¹⁵ וָאֶפְלָה עַל־פְּנֵי וָאֲזַעַק וָאָמַר אָהָה אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הַמְשַׁחֵת אֶת־הָ אֵת כָּל־שְׂאֵרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁפְכָה אֶת־חַמְתְּךָ עַל־יְרוּשָׁלַם:</p>	<p>8a b c d e f</p>	<p>And while they were killing, (and I was left alone,) I fell on my face, and cried out, and I said: “Ah Lord GOD! Are you destroying the entire remnant of Israel as you pour out your wrath upon Jerusalem?”</p>
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי עוֹן בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְהוּדָה גָּדוֹל בְּמָאֵד מְאֹד וּתְמִילָא הָאָרֶץ דָּמִים וְהָעִיר מְלֹאָה מִטָּמָה כִּי אָמְרוּ עָזַב יְהוָה אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וְאֵין יְהוָה רֹאֵה:</p>	<p>9a b c d e f g</p>	<p>And he said to me, “The guilt of the House of Israel and Judah is very, very great; filled is the land with bloodshed, and the city is filled with perversity; for they say, ‘YHWH has forsaken the land, and YHWH does not see.’</p>
<p>וְגַם־אָנִי לֹא־תַחֲסֵי עֵינֵי וְלֹא אֶחְמַל דְּרַכְכֶם בְּרֹאשֵׁי נְתָתִי:</p>	<p>10a_p a b c</p>	<p>As for me, my eye will not spare, and I will not have pity; Their way I give upon their heads.”</p>
<p>[וַיִּהְיֶה הָאִישׁ לְבָשׁ הַבְּדִים אֲשֶׁר הִקְסָת בְּמִתְנָיו מֵשִׁיב דְּבַר לֵאמֹר עָשִׂיתִי כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתַנִּי:] ס</p>	<p>11a₁ b a₂ c d</p>	<p>[And behold, the man clothed in linen, who had the case at his loins, brought back word, saying, “I have done as you commanded me.”]</p>

¹² *Qere* instead of *kethib* על (interchange of אל and על occurs often throughout the book of Ezekiel).

¹³ LXX translates mistakenly τὰς ὁδοὺς (the ways) instead of MT הַתְּצִרוֹת (the courts). The MT is preferred, with Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 107; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 85; Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 123.

¹⁴ MT: וְצֵאוּ וְהָכּוּ בְּעִיר.

¹⁵ Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 107 defends the MT.

וַאֲרָאָה וַהֲבִיֵּה אֶל־הַרְקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁ הַכְּרֻבִּים כְּאֶבֶן סַפִּיר (כְּמֵרְאָה) דְמוּת כֹּסֵא (נִרְאָה) ¹⁶ עֲלֵיהֶם:	10:1 a b ₁ c b ₂	And I looked, and behold, above the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim something like sapphire stone, (like the appearance of) the likeness of a throne, appeared above them.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִישׁ לְבִשׁ הַבְּדִים (וַיֹּאמֶר) ¹⁷ בֹּא אֶל־בֵּינֹת לַגִּלְגָּל אֶל־תַּחַת לְכְרוּב וּמְלֵא חַפְנֶיךָ גַחְלֵי־אֵשׁ מִבֵּינֹת לְכְרֻבִּים וְזָרַק עַל־הָעִיר וַיְבֹא לְעֵינָי:	2a b c d e f	And he said to the man clothed in linen, (he said) “Go within the wheelwork underneath the cherub and fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.” And he went in before my eyes.
וְהַכְּרֻבִּים עֲמָדִים מִיְמִין לַבַּיִת כְּבָאוּ הָאִישׁ וְהָעָנָן מָלֵא אֶת־הַחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִית:	3a b	Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in; and a cloud filled the inner court.
וַיָּרֶם כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה מֵעַל הַכְּרוּב עַל מַפְתַּן הַבַּיִת וַיִּמְלֵא הַבַּיִת אֶת־הָעָנָן וְהַחֲצָר מְלֵאָה אֶת־נֹגַהּ כְּבוֹד יְהוָה:	4a b c	And the Glory of YHWH rose up from the cherub to the threshold of the house; and filled was the house with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the Glory of YHWH.
וְקוֹל כַּנְּפֵי הַכְּרוּבִּים נִשְׁמַע עַד־הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה כְּקוֹל אֶל־שָׂדֵי בְדָבְרוֹ:	5	And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of the Almighty when he speaks.
וַיְהִי בְצֻוּתוֹ אֶת־הָאִישׁ לְבִשׁ־הַבְּדִים ¹⁸ לֵאמֹר קַח אֵשׁ מִבֵּינֹת לַגִּלְגָּל מִבֵּינֹת לְכְרוּבִּים וַיְבֹא [וַיַּעֲמֵד אַצְלַי הָאוֹפֵן]:	6a b c d	But before, as he had commanded the man clothed in linen thus: “Take fire from among the wheelwork, from among the cherubim,” he had gone in [and he stood beside a wheel.]
וַיִּשְׁלַח (הַכְּרוּב) אֶת־יָדוֹ (מִבֵּינֹת לְכְרוּבִּים) אֶל־הָאֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר בֵּינֹת הַכְּרֻבִּים וַיִּשָּׂא [וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־חַפְנֵי לְבִשׁ הַבְּדִים] וַיִּקַּח וַיֵּצֵא:	7a b c d e f	And (a cherub) stretched out his hand (from among the cherubim) to the fire that was among the cherubim, and he lifted it up, [and put it into the hands of the one clothed in linen,] and he took it and went out.
[וַיֵּרָא לְכְרֻבִּים תְּבֻנִית יְד־אָדָם תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵיהֶם:]	8	[The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.]

¹⁶ Some LXX manuscripts do not account for נִרְאָה. According to Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 65, the verb was inserted to make the complicated structure of the nominal sentence more intelligible.

¹⁷ LXX omits 10:2b and is followed in this e.g. by Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 119; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 87. Conversely, Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 180. Then again, Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 66 argues for 10:2b as the older version; however his theory has no support from the versions.

¹⁸ Both in 10:6a and in 10:7d, LXX calls the “man in linen” τῷ ἀνδρὶ τῷ ἐνδεδυκότῃ τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἁγίαν, “the man in the holy clothes”. This is a secondary interpretation of its *Vorlage* (so e.g. Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 318).

<p>[וַאֲרָאָה וְהִנֵּה אַרְבַּעַה אֹפְנִים אֲצֶל הַכְּרוּבִים אוֹפֵן אֶחָד אֲצֶל הַכְּרוּב אֶחָד וְאוֹפֵן אֶחָד אֲצֶל הַכְּרוּב אֶחָד וּמְרָאָה הָאוֹפְנִים כְּעֵיִן אֶבֶן תְּרִשִׁישׁ:</p>	<p>9a b c d e</p>	<p>And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, / one wheel beside each cherub; and one wheel beside each cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like the gleam of beryl stone.</p>
<p>וּמְרָאֵיהֶם דְּמוּת אֶחָד לְאַרְבַּעֹתָם כְּאִשֶׁר יִהְיֶה הָאוֹפֵן בְּתוֹךְ הָאוֹפֵן:</p>	<p>10a_p a b</p>	<p>And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as it were a wheel within a wheel.</p>
<p>בְּלִכְתָּם אֶל־אַרְבַּעַת רְבָעֵיהֶם יָלְכוּ לֹא יִסְבוּ בְּלִכְתָּם כִּי הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִפְנֶה הָרֹאשׁ אֲחֵרָיו יָלְכוּ לֹא יִסְבוּ בְּלִכְתָּם:</p>	<p>11a b c₁ d c₂ e</p>	<p>When they went, they went in any of their four directions; / they did not turn as they went, for in whatever direction the front wheel faced the others went behind it they did not turn as they went.</p>
<p>(וְכָל־בְּשָׂרָם)¹⁹ וּגְבֵיהֶם וַיְדִיחֵם וּכְנָפֵיהֶם וְהָאוֹפְנִים מְלֵאִים עֵינִים סָבִיב לְאַרְבַּעֹתָם אוֹפְנֵיהֶם:</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>And (their entire body and) their rims/backs, their hands, their wings, and the wheels were full of eyes all around—the wheels of the four of them.</p>
<p>לְאוֹפְנֵים לָהֶם קוֹרָא הַגִּלְגָּל בְּאָזְנֵי:</p>	<p>13a_p a</p>	<p>As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing “the wheelwork”.</p>
<p><²⁰></p>	<p>14</p>	
<p>וַיִּרְמוּ הַכְּרוּבִים הִיא הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי בְּנַהַר־כְּבָר:</p>	<p>15a b c</p>	<p>And the cherubim rose up. This was the living creature that I had seen by the river Chebar.</p>
<p>וּבְלִכְתְּ הַכְּרוּבִים יָלְכוּ הָאוֹפְנִים אֲצֵלָם וּבְשָׂאת הַכְּרוּבִים אֶת־כְּנָפֵיהֶם לָרוּם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ לֹא־יִסְבוּ הָאוֹפְנִים (גַּם־הֵם מֵאֲצֵלָם):</p>	<p>16a b</p>	<p>And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise up from the earth, the wheels (also) did not turn (from beside them).</p>
<p>בְּעֶמְדָם יַעֲמֹדוּ וּבְרוֹמָם יִרְוּמוּ אוֹתָם כִּי רוּחַ הַחַיָּה בָּהֶם:]</p>	<p>17a b c</p>	<p>When those stood, these stood, and when those rose up, these rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creature/of life was in them.</p>
<p>וַיֵּצֵא כְבוֹד יְהוָה מֵעַל (מִפֶּתַח)²¹ הַבַּיִת [וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל־הַכְּרוּבִים:]</p>	<p>18a b</p>	<p>Then the Glory of YHWH went out from (the threshold of) the house, [and stood above the cherubim.]</p>
<p>[וַיִּשְׂאוּ הַכְּרוּבִים אֶת־כְּנָפֵיהֶם וַיִּרְוּמוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ לְעֵינַי בְּצֵאתָם וְהָאוֹפְנִים לְעִמָּתָם] וַיַּעֲמֵד פֶּתַח שַׁעַר בֵּית־יְהוָה הַקֶּדְמוֹנִי [וַיִּכְבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלֵיהֶם מִלְמַעְלָה:]</p>	<p>19a b c d e</p>	<p>[And the cherubim lifted up their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight as they went out, / and the wheels were at their side;] and stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of YHWH; [and the Glory of the God of Israel was above them.]</p>

¹⁹ וְכָל־בְּשָׂרָם is not represented in LXX; Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 71.

²⁰ MT: (And each had four faces: the first face the face of the cherub, and the second face the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle).

²¹ Some LXX manuscripts do not represent מִפֶּתַח. Dijkstra, “Glosses,” 75 sees in it “a case of contextual harmonization” to 9:3 and 10:4 (see however Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 91 in defence of MT).

<p>[היא החיה אשר ראיתי תחת אלהי־ישׂראל בנהר־כבר ואדע כי כרובים הם:]</p>	<p>20a b c d</p>	<p>[These were the living creature that I had seen underneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim.</p>
<p>ארבעה (ארבעה) פנים לאחד וארבע כנפים לאחד ודמות ידי אדם תחת כנפיהם:</p>	<p>21a b c</p>	<p>Each had four (four) faces, and four wings had each, and a likeness of human hands was underneath their wings.</p>
<p>ודמות פניהם המה הפנים אשר ראיתי על־נהר־כבר²² (מראיהם ואותם) איש אל־עבר פניו ילכו:]</p>	<p>22a_p a b c</p>	<p>And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces (whose appearance) I had seen by the river Chebar. Each one went straight ahead.]</p>
<p>ותשא אתי רוח ותבא אתי אל־שער בית־יהוה הקדמוני הפונה קדימה והנה בפתח השער עשרים וחמשה איש וארא בתוכם את־יאזניה בן־עזר ואת־פלטיהו בן־בנאיהו שרי העם: פ</p>	<p>11:1a b c d</p>	<p>A Spirit lifted me up, and brought me to the east gate of the house of YHWH, which faces east. And behold, at the entrance of the gate: twenty-five men; and I saw among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur, and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, officials of the people.</p>
<p>ויאמר אלי בן־אדם אלה האנשים החשבים אנו והיעצים עצת־רע בעיר הזאת:</p>	<p>2a b</p>	<p>And he said to me, “Son of man, these men are planners of iniquity and advisers of wicked advice in this city;</p>
<p>האמרים לא בקרוב בנות בתים היא הסיר ואנחנו הבשר:</p>	<p>3a b c d</p>	<p>who say, ‘The time is not near to build houses; this [city] is the pot, and we are the meat.’</p>
<p>לכן הנבא עליהם הנבא בן־אדם:</p>	<p>4a b</p>	<p>Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, son of man.”</p>
<p>ותפל עלי רוח יהוה ויאמר אלי אמר כה־אמר יהוה בן אמרתם בית ישׂראל ומעלות רוחכם אני ידעתיה:</p>	<p>5a b c d e f_p f</p>	<p>And the spirit of YHWH fell upon me, and he said to me, “Say, Thus says YHWH: This is what you think, O House of Israel; for the things that come into your mind, I know them.</p>
<p>הרבייתם חלליכם בעיר הזאת ומלאתם חוצותיה חלל: פ</p>	<p>6a b</p>	<p>You have multiplied your slain in this city, and you have filled its streets with slain.</p>
<p>לכן כה־אמר (אדני) יהוה חלליכם אשר שמתם בתוכה המה הבשר והיא הסיר ואתכם הוציא²³ מתוכה:</p>	<p>7a b_p c b d e</p>	<p>Therefore thus says (the Lord) YHWH: Your slain whom you have placed within it, they are the meat, and this [city] is the pot; but you shall be taken out of it.</p>

²² In analogy to 10:20b, LXX adds in 10:22b the phrase ὑποκάτω τῆς δόξης θεοῦ Ἰσραηλ. Since this can be explained as dittography, the MT reading appears to be more probable. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 119; and Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 91).

²³ LXX (and also L, T, S, V) render the verb in first person singular: ἐξάξω (parallel to v. 9a). This reading is supported by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 200; and Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 94.

<p>חָרַב יִרְאֲתֶם וְחָרַב אָבִיא עֲלֵיכֶם נְאֻם (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה:</p>	<p>8a b c</p>	<p>The sword you have feared; and the sword I will bring upon you, says (the Lord) YHWH.</p>
<p>וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתּוֹכָהּ וְנָתַתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּיַד־זָרִים וְעָשִׂיתִי בְכֶם שְׁפָטִים:</p>	<p>9a b c</p>	<p>And I will take you out of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgements upon you.</p>
<p>בַּחָרַב תִּפְלוּ עַל־גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשַׁפּוּט אֶתְכֶם וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:</p>	<p>10a b c d</p>	<p>By the sword you shall fall; at the border of Israel I will judge you; and you shall know that I am YHWH.</p>
<p>הִיא לֹא־תִהְיֶה לְכֶם לְסִיר וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ בְּתוֹכָהּ לְבָשָׂר אֶל־גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשַׁפּוּט אֶתְכֶם:</p>	<p>11a b c</p>	<p>This [city] shall not be your pot, and you shall not be the meat inside it; at the border of Israel I will judge you;</p>
<p>וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה ^{<...>}24:</p>	<p>12a b</p>	<p>and you shall know that I am YHWH; <...>.”</p>
<p>וַיְהִי כִּהְנַבְאִי וּפְלִטְיָהוּ בֶן־בְּנִיָּה מֵת וְאָפַל עַל־פָּנָי וַאֲזַעַק קוֹל־גָּדוֹל וַאֲמַר אָהָה (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה כִּלְהָ אַתָּה עוֹשֶׂה אֶת שְׂאֲרֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ</p>	<p>13a b c d e f</p>	<p>And it happened while I was prophesying: Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. And I fell down on my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, “Ah (Lord) YHWH! are you making a full end of the remnant of Israel?”</p>
<p>וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>And the word of YHWH came to me:</p>
<p>בְּנֶ־אָדָם אַחִידָה (אֲחִידָה) אֲנִישִׁי גְּאֻלְתָּהּ וְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּלֵה אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ לָהֶם יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם רַחֲקוּ מֵעַל יְהוָה לָנוּ (הִיא) ²⁵ נִתְּנָה הָאָרֶץ לְמוֹרְשָׁה: ס</p>	<p>15a_p a b c</p>	<p>“Son of man, your kinsfolk, (your kin,) your fellow exiles and the whole House of Israel, all of them, / those of whom the residents of Jerusalem have said, ‘They have gone far from YHWH; to us this land is given as possession.’</p>
<p>לֵכֵן אֲמַר כֹּה־אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה כִּי הֲרַחַקְתִּים בְּגוֹיִם וְכִי הִפְצִיתִים בְּאַרְצוֹת וְאַהִי לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מֵעַט בְּאַרְצוֹת אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ שָׁמָּה: ס</p>	<p>16a b c d e f</p>	<p>Therefore say, ‘Thus says (the Lord) YHWH: Though I removed them far away among the nations, / and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have become for them a sanctuary for a little while/to a little extent, in the countries where they have gone to.’</p>
<p>לֵכֵן אֲמַר כֹּה־אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן־הָעַמִּים וְאִסַּפְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן־הָאַרְצוֹת אֲשֶׁר נִפְצַוְתֶם בָּהֶם וְנָתַתִּי לְכֶם אֶת־אֲדָמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: ²⁶</p>	<p>17a b c d e f</p>	<p>Therefore say, ‘Thus says (the Lord) YHWH: I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’</p>

²⁴ 11:12c-e₂ MT: (whose statutes you have not followed, and whose ordinances you have not kept, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are around you).

²⁵ היא is not represented in LXX; neither does it appear in the parallel passage 33:24. However, some scholars rather consider הָאָרֶץ an explicative gloss to היא than vice versa; e.g. Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 111; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 6f. For a brief summary of opinions, see Allen, *Ezekiel 1-19*, 128.

<p>וּבְאוּ-שָׁמָּה וְהִסִּירוּ אֶת-כָּל-שִׁקּוּצֵיהָ וְאֶת-כָּל-תּוֹעֲבוֹתֶיהָ מִמִּצְּהָ: וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם לֵב אֶחָד²⁷ וְרוּחַ חַדְשָׁה אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְהִסִּרְתִּי לֵב הָאֲבָן מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם לֵב בָּשָׂר:</p>	<p>18a b</p>	<p>And when they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it.</p>
<p>לְמַעַן בְּחֻקֹּתַי יֵלְכוּ וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אֹתָם וְהָיוּ-לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים:</p>	<p>19a b c d</p>	<p>And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will give within you; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and I will give them a heart of flesh,</p>
<p>וְאֶל-לֵב שִׁקּוּצֵיהֶם וְתוֹעֲבוֹתֵיהֶם לְבָם²⁸ הִלֵּךְ דַּרְכָם בְּרָאשָׁם נָתַתִּי נְאֻם (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה:</p>	<p>20a b c d e</p>	<p>so that in my statutes they shall walk and my ordinances they shall keep and they shall obey them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.</p>
<p>וַיִּשְׂאוּ הַכְּרוּבִים אֶת-כַּנְּפֵיהֶם וְהָאוֹפָנִים לְעִמָּתָם וַיִּכְבֹּד אֱלֹהֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲלֵיהֶם מִלְמַעְלָה:</p>	<p>21a b c</p>	<p>But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, their way I give upon their heads, says (the Lord) YHWH.”</p>
<p>וַיַּעַל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה מֵעַל תּוֹךְ הָעִיר וַיַּעֲמֵד עַל-הַהָר אֲשֶׁר מִקֶּדֶם לְעִיר:</p>	<p>22a b c</p>	<p>Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, and the wheels were beside them; and the Glory of the God of Israel was above them.</p>
<p>וַיִּרְוַח נְשֹׂאתַי וַתְּבִיאַנִי כְשִׁדְיָמָה אֶל-הַגּוֹלָה בְּמִרְאָה בְּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים וַיַּעַל מֵעַלִי הַמִּרְאָה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי:</p>	<p>23a b c</p>	<p>And the Glory of YHWH ascended from the middle of the city, and stood on the mountain which is east of the city.</p>
<p>וַאֲדַבֵּר אֶל-הַגּוֹלָה אֵת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאֵנִי: פ</p>	<p>24a b c d</p>	<p>And a spirit lifted me up and brought me in the vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen ascended from me.</p>
<p>וַאֲדַבֵּר אֶל-הַגּוֹלָה אֵת כָּל-דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאֵנִי: פ</p>	<p>25a b</p>	<p>And I told the exiles all the deeds/words of YHWH that he had shown me.</p>

²⁶ In 11:17-19, the MT verbal forms fluctuate between second and third person plural whereas LXX constantly uses third person plural. The variation in MT is maintained as *lectio difficilior*; it seems to be due to scribal activity in terms of redaction criticism, while LXX smoothes the text. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 200; Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 7-9. See also Chap. 3.2.1.2.

²⁷ LXX: καρδῖαν ἐτέραν, but some later Greek translations and the Vulgate have the same reading as MT. The translator (or scribe) might have misread אחד to אחר (see however Ohnesorge, *Jahwe gestaltet sein Volk neu*, 9f. in favour of LXX). S: “new heart”; T: “fearful heart” as well as “fearful spirit”.

²⁸ The beginning of the verse in the MT is awkward and probably corrupt; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20*, 186; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 1-24*, 342.

Appendix C: The Text of Ezekiel 37:1-14

הַיְתָה ¹ עָלַי יַד־יְהוָה וַיֹּצֵאֲנִי בְרוּחַ יְהוָה וַיְנִיחֵנִי בְּתוֹךְ הַבְּקָעָה וְהָיָא מְלֵאָה עֲצָמוֹת ² :	37:1a b c d	The hand of YHWH was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of YHWH and he set me down in the middle of the valley— and it was full of bones.
וְהַעֲבִירֵנִי עֲלֵיהֶם סָבִיב וְהִנֵּה רַבּוֹת מְאֹד עַל־פְּנֵי הַבְּקָעָה וְהִנֵּה ³ יְבֹשׁוֹת מְאֹד:	2a b c	And he made me pass by them, all around, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; / and behold, they were very dry.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּוֹאֲדָם הַתְּחַיֶּינָה הַעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וָאֵמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ:	3a b c d	And he said to me, “Son of man, will these bones live?” And I said, “O (Lord) YHWH, you know.”
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הִנְבֵּא עַל־הַעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וָאֵמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם הַעֲצָמוֹת הַיְבֹשׁוֹת שְׁמַעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה:	4a b c d	And He said to me, “Prophecy to these bones and you shall say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of YHWH.’”
כֹּה אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה לְעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה הִנֵּה אֲנִי מְבִיא בְכֶם רוּחַ ⁴ וְחָיִיתֶם:	5a b c	Thus says (the Lord)YHWH to these bones, ‘Behold, I am going to bring breath into you and you shall live.
וְנָתַתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם גְּדִים וְהַעֲלֵתִי עֲלֵיכֶם בָּשָׂר וְקָרַמְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם עוֹר וְנָתַתִּי בְכֶם רוּחַ ⁵ וְחָיִיתֶם וַיֵּדַעְתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:	6a b c d e f g	I will put sinews on you, and I will bring up flesh on you, and I will cover you with skin and I will put breath in you and you shall live; and you shall know that I am YHWH.”
[וְנִבֵּאתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי ⁶ וַיְהִי ⁷ <> כִּהְנַבְּאִי וְהִנֵּה־רָרַעַשׁ וַתִּקְרְבוּ עֲצָמוֹת עֶצֶם אֶל־עֶצְמוֹ:	7a b c d e	[So I prophesied as I had been commanded.] And it happened <> while I was prophesying, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

¹ The beginning of a text unit with הַיְתָה is highly unusual but *lectio difficilior*. LXX καὶ ἐγένετο might be the translation of an original וַיְהִי or, more likely, a correction of the MT. Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 163. In conjunction with this, scholars wonder if the lack of a date is authentic or a sign of textual loss; e.g. Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 506f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 891f.

² As with the הָיָה in 1:5-26, the gender of suffixes and verbal forms referring to עֲצָמוֹת varies. In contrast to 1:5-26, this is usually not seen as an indication of redaction (Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 886; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 742). Here in 1d, LXX specifies ὀστέων ἀνθρώπων.

³ LXX and S omit the second וְהִנֵּה, but in view of its function of emphasising the surprise there is no need to amend the MT. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 886f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 367.

⁴ LXX summarizes MT וְחָיִיתֶם... as πνεῦμα ζωῆς. MT is preferred as *lectio difficilior*. Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 278; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 201.

⁵ LXX interprets πνεῦμά μου (14a; 36:27), seeing here already the “Spirit of God” at work while in MT רוּחַ is used in the neutral sense of breath/principle of life. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 404; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 743.

⁶ Three MSS read וַיֵּדַעְתֶּם; although this corresponds to LXX, S, and V, it could be due to assimilation to v. 10b. The MT reading is more likely to be original. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 887; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 165.

⁷ MT adds וַיְהִי to וְהִנֵּה, which is not represented in LXX and grammatically inelegant (in fact, unique) in Hebrew. It has been called a “comparative gloss” in analogy to 3:12, 13; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 182. Similarly Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 399; Hossfeld, *Untersuchungen*, 356f. In spite of Block, *Book of*

<p>וְרָאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה עֲלֵיהֶם גְּדִים וּבָשָׂר עָלֶיהָ וַיִּקְרָם עֲלֵיהֶם עוֹר מִלְמַעְלָה [וְרוּחַ אֵין בָּהֶם:]</p>	8a b c d e	As I was looking on, behold, on them were sinews, and flesh had come up and skin was covering over them; [but no breath was in them.]
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הִנְבֵּא אֶל־הַרוּחַ הִנְבֵּא בְּנוֹ-אָדָם וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־הַרוּחַ כֹּה־אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה מֵאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת בָּאֵי (הַרוּחַ)⁸ וַיִּפְחֵי בְּהַרוּגִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּחְיּוּ:</p>	9a b c d e f g h	Then He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and you shall say to the breath, ‘Thus says (the Lord)YHWH, From the four winds come, (O breath,) and breathe on these slain, that they may live’.”
<p>וְהִנְבֵּאתִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּנִי] וַתָּבוֹא בָהֶם [הַ]רוּחַ וַיִּחְיּוּ וַיַּעֲמָדוּ עַל־רַגְלֵיהֶם חֵיל גָּדוֹל מְאֹד־מְאֹד: ס</p>	10a b c d e	So I prophesied as He had commanded me,] and [the] breath came into them, and they lived and they stood up on their feet, a very very great army.
<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי⁹ בְּנוֹ־אָדָם הַעֲצָמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה כָּל־בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה הִנֵּה¹⁰ אֲמָרִים יָבֵשׁוּ עֲצָמוֹתֵינוּ <¹¹ אֲבָדָה תִּקְוַתֵּנוּ נִגְזַרְנוּ לָנוּ:</p>	11a b _p b c d e f	Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones, the whole House of Israel are they; behold, they say, ‘Dried up are our bones; lost is our hope; completely cut off are we.’”
<p>לָכֵן הִנְבֵּא וְאָמַרְתָּ (אֲלֵיהֶם) כֹּה־אָמַר (אֲדֹנָי) יְהוָה הִנֵּה אֲנִי פֹתַח אֶת־קְבֻרוֹתֵיכֶם וְהֵעֲלִיתִי אֶתְכֶם מִקְבֻרוֹתֵיכֶם <¹² וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל־אֲדָמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס</p>	12a b c d e f	Therefore prophecy and you shall say (to them), ‘Thus says (YHWH) GOD, Behold, I am going to open your graves and I will lead you up from your graves <>; and I will bring you back to the soil of Israel.
<p>[וַיִּדְעַתֶּם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה]</p>	13a b	[And you shall know that I am YHWH,

Ezekiel 25-48, 368; and Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 166 defending MT, יָקוֹל seems indeed to be a gloss.

⁸ LXX omits הַרוּחַ. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 887; and Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 369 are in favour of the MT.

⁹ LXX adds κύριος.

¹⁰ LXX does not attest for הִנֵּה but instead has καὶ αὐτοί. The verbless construction with *casus pendens* in the MT, which in the past has not always been recognized, puts a stronger emphasis on the decoding of the symbol “bones.” There is no need to change MT consonants or sentence limits. Bartelmus, “Textkritik, Literarkritik und Syntax,” 55-64; also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37*, 744f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 369.

¹¹ The MT has וְאָבָדָה; however, a number of versions read parataxis. The ו could be dittography from the preceding word. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 887; Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 167.

¹² MT has עַמִּי (O my people) at the end of 12e. Not being represented in LXX and S, this is most likely a later insertion, perhaps from the following verse. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 887f; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 279; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 183.

בַּפְתָּחִי אֶת־קְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם וּבְהֶעֱלֹתִי אֶתְכֶם מִקְבֻרֹתֵיכֶם (עַמִּי) ¹³ :]	b _i ¹⁴	when I open your graves and when I lead you up from your graves, (my people).]
וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְּכֶם וְחִיִּיתֶם וְהִנָּחֵתִי אֶתְכֶם עַל־אֲדָמַתְכֶם וַיֵּדְעֶתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי וְעָשִׂיתִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה ¹⁵ : פ	14a b c d e f g	I will put my Spirit within you and you shall live, and I will set you down on your own soil. And you shall know that I, YHWH, have spoken and I will act, —says YHWH.”

¹³ In analogy to the previous verse, S does not represent עַמִּי. Although LXX agrees with MT in this instance, the majority of scholars prefer the minority reading of S as original; e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 400; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 888; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 279; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 183. For a contrary opinion, see Schnocks, *Rettung und Neuschöpfung*, 167. The decision is influenced by the redaction critical status assumed for v. 13b_i (refer to Chap. 4.2.3).

¹⁴ In the present application of Richter's verse subdivision system, infinitive constructions are generally not assigned a separate line. However, in the case of v. 13 it seems appropriate to make an exception and distinguish 13b from 13b_i, for the sake of greater clarity, especially in the redaction critical discussion.

¹⁵ V and S read the double divine name here (*ait dominus deus*). Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 888.

Appendix D: The Text of Ezekiel 40:1-43:12; 44:1-6; 47:1-12

<p>בְּעֶשְׂרִים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה לְגִלוּתֵנוּ בְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה² בְּעֶשְׂרִי לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּאַרְבַּע עָשָׂר שָׁנָה אַחֵר אֲשֶׁר הִכְתָּהּ הָעִיר בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הִיָּתָה עָלַי יְדִי־הָהוּא וַיָּבֵא אֹתִי (שָׁמָּה):</p>	<p>40:1a₁ In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year b after the city was struck down, a₂ on that very day, the hand of YHWH was upon me, c and he brought me (there)...</p>
<p>בְּמַרְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים (הַבִּיאָנִי)³ אֶל־אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְנִיחֵנִי אֶל־הַר גָּבוֹהַ מְאֹד וְעָלְיוֹ כְּמִבְנֵה־עִיר מִנְּגִבָּה:</p>	<p>2a ... in divine visions (he brought me) to the land of Israel, b and he set me down upon a very high mountain, c on which was a structure like a city to the south.</p>
<p>וַיָּבִיא אוֹתִי שָׁמָּה וַהֲבִיֵּא אִישׁ מֵרְאֵהוּ כְּמֵרְאֵה נְחֹשֶׁת וּפְתִיל־פְּשָׁתִים בְּיָדוֹ וְקֶנֶה הַמִּדָּה וְהוּא עֹמֵד בַּשַּׁעַר:</p>	<p>3a And he brought me there, b and behold, a man; c his appearance was like the appearance of bronze; d a linen cord was in his hand and a measuring reed; e and he was standing in the gate.</p>
<p>וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלַי הָאִישׁ בְּוֹאֲדָם רְאֵה בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְאָזְנוֹךָ שְׁמַע וְשִׂים לְבָבְךָ לְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי מֵרְאֵה אוֹתְךָ כִּי לָמַעַן הִרְאֹתִיכָה הַבְּאִתָּה הַזֶּה הֲגַד אֶת־כָּל־ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֵה לְבַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>	<p>4a And the man said to me, b “Son of man, look with your eyes, c and with your ears hear, d and set your mind upon all e that I shall show you, f for you were brought here in order that I might g₁ show it to you; / describe all h that you see g₂ to the House of Israel.”</p>
<p>וַהֲבִיֵּא חוֹמָה מְחוּץ לְבַיִת סָבִיב סָבִיב וּבְיַד הָאִישׁ קֶנֶה הַמִּדָּה שֵׁשׁ־אַמּוֹת בְּאַמָּה וְטַפַּח וַיִּמַּד אֶת־רֹחַב הַבְּנָיָה קֶנֶה אֶחָד וְקוֹמָה קֶנֶה אֶחָד:</p>	<p>5a And behold, there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area, b and in the man's hand was a measuring reed of six cubits, each a cubit and a handwidth; c so he measured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed.</p>
<p>וַיְבֹא אֶל־שַׁעַר אֲשֶׁר פָּנָיו דָּרָךְ הַקִּדְמִיָּה וַיַּעֲלֶה⁴ בְּמַעְלוֹתָיו וַיִּמַּד אֶת־סָף הַשַּׁעַר קֶנֶה אֶחָד רֹחַב (וְאֵת סָף אֶחָד קֶנֶה אֶחָד רֹחַב):⁵</p>	<p>6a Then he went into the gate b which was facing toward east, c he went up its steps, d and measured the threshold of the gate, one reed deep (and one threshold, one reed deep).</p>

¹ LXX adds καὶ ἐγένετο as in 1:1; 8:1.

² LXX translates “in the first month”; see Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 8f. note 1; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 982, 995. According to Kutsch, *Die chronologischen Daten*, 33-36, the meaning is identical.

³ LXX represents only one “he brought me”. Yet the repetition is explicable if 40:2 is mostly a gloss; with Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 28. By contrast, LXX is preferred by Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 982.

⁴ Not represented in LXX, who reads instead ἐν ἐπτά ἀναβαθμοῖς, anticipating vv. 22, 26. The MT is considered as the original reading. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 983f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 517.

⁵ The Hebrew text seems to be corrupt. S reads “another threshold” at the second occurrence; LXX omits the latter part of the sentence: καὶ διεμέτρησεν τὸ αἶλαμ τῆς πύλης ἴσον τῷ καλύμῳ. There is no consensus in the literature: Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 129f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 984 interpret the MT as dittography; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 220 sees the former part of the clause as correction of the latter; whilst Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 34 points out it could be vice versa.

וְהָאֶזְרָא ⁶ קָנָה אֶחָד אַרְבֵּי וְקָנָה אֶחָד רָחֵב וּבֵין הַתְּאִים חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת וְסָף הַשַּׁעַר מֵאֲצֵל אוֹלָם הַשַּׁעַר מִהַבְּיֹת קָנָה אֶחָד:	7a b c d	and the recess, one reed long, and one reed broad; and the space between the recesses, five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate out of the temple, one reed.
וַיִּמַּד אֶת־אֵלֶם הַשַּׁעַר > ⁷ :	8	Then he measured the vestibule of the gate...
< שְׁמֹנֶה אַמּוֹת וְאֵילוֹ שְׁתַּיִם אַמּוֹת וְאֵלֶם הַשַּׁעַר מִהַבְּיֹת:	9a b c	...eight cubits; and its pilasters, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end.
וְתָאֵי הַשַּׁעַר דְּרָדָה הַקְּדִים שְׁלִישֵׁה מִפֶּה וּשְׁלִישֵׁה מִפֶּה מִדָּה אַחַת לְשְׁלִישָׁתָם וּמִדָּה אַחַת לְאֵילָם מִפֶּה וּמִפּוֹ:	10a b c	And there were three recesses on either side of the east gate; the three were of the same size; and the pilasters on either side were of the same size.
וַיִּמַּד אֶת־רָחֵב פְּתַח־הַשַּׁעַר עֶשְׂרֵה אַמּוֹת אַרְבֵּי הַשַּׁעַר שְׁלוֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה אַמּוֹת:	11a b	Then he measured the width of the opening of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate, thirteen cubits.
וּגְבוּל לְפָנֵי הַתְּאִים אֶמָּה אַחַת וְאֶמָּה־אַחַת גְּבוּל מִפֶּה וְהַתְּאִים שֵׁשׁ־אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ וְשֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ:	12a b c	And a barrier before the recesses was one cubit and one cubit a barrier, either side; and the recesses were six cubits on either side.
וַיִּמַּד אֶת־הַשַּׁעַר מִגַּב הַתְּאִים לְגָגוֹ רָחֵב עֶשְׂרִים וְחֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת פְּתַח נֶגֶד פְּתַח:	13a b	Then he measured the gate from the back of the one recess to the back of the other, a width of twenty-five cubits, from entrance to entrance.
[וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־אֵילִים שְׁשִׁים אַמָּה וְאֶל־אֵיל הַחֲצָר הַשַּׁעַר סָבִיב סָבִיב:]	14a b	[He did also the pilasters, sixty cubits; and to the pilasters of the court the gate all around.]
< וּמִלְּפָנָי > ⁸ הֵיאִתּוֹן עַל־לְפָנֵי אֵלֶם הַשַּׁעַר הַפְּנִימִי חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה:	15	From the front of the gate at the entry to the end of the inner vestibule of the gate: fifty cubits.
וְחַלּוֹנוֹת אֲטֻמוֹת אֶל־הַתְּאִים וְאֶל אֶל־הַמָּה לְפָנֵיהֶם לְשַׁעַר סָבִיב סָבִיב וְכֹן לְאַלְמוֹת וְחַלּוֹנוֹת סָבִיב סָבִיב לְפָנֵיהֶם וְאֶל־אֵיל תְּמָרִים:	16a b ₁ b _p b ₂ c	And the gate had closed windows toward the recesses and toward their pilasters all around, and likewise the vestibule, it had windows on the inside all around, and on the pilasters were palm trees.
וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה וְהִנֵּה לְשִׁכּוֹת וְרֻצְפָּה עֲשׂוּי לְחֲצָר סָבִיב סָבִיב שְׁלִשִׁים לְשִׁכּוֹת אֶל־הַרֻצְפָּה:	17a b c	Then he brought me into the outer court; and behold, there were chambers, and a pavement, all around the court; thirty chambers fronted on the pavement.
וְהַרֻצְפָּה אֶל־כְּתֵף הַשַּׁעַר לְעִמַּת אַרְבֵּי הַשַּׁעַר הַרֻצְפָּה הַתַּחְתּוֹנָה:	18a b	And the pavement ran along the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement.

⁶ The text order of 40:7-10 differs in LXX, with a longer “plus” in LXX measuring three recesses. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 984; Johan Lust, “Exegesis and Theology in the Septuagint of Ezekiel: The Longer ‘Pluses’ and Ezek 43:1-9,” in *VI Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Jerusalem 1986*, ed. Claude E. Cox (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 206.

⁷ With Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 984, following the reading of LXX, S, V over against the MT of 40:8-9a: מהבית קנה אחד: וימד את־אלם השער.

⁸ MT: ועל פני השע; amended with most commentators to ומלפני on contextual grounds, as the measuring is necessarily done from one point to another; e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 434; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 985; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 220f; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 36.

<p>וַיִּמַד רֹחַב מִלְפְּנֵי הַשַּׁעַר הַמִּתְחַתֵּן לַפְּנֵי הַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִי מִחוּץ מֵאֵה אֲמָה הַקָּדִים וְהַצָּפוֹן:</p>	<p>19a</p>	<p>Then he measured the distance from the front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, one hundred cubits; the east.</p>
<p>וְהַשַּׁעַר אֲשֶׁר פָּנָיו דָּרָךְ הַצָּפוֹן לַחֲצַר הַחִיצוֹנָה מִדָּד אָרְכוֹ וְרָחְבוֹ:</p>	<p>b</p> <p>20a₁</p> <p>b</p> <p>a₂</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And the north:</p> <p>The gate that faced toward the north, belonged to the outer court.</p> <p>He measured its length and its width.</p>
<p>וְתֵאוּ שְׁלוֹשָׁה מִפּוֹ וּשְׁלֹשָׁה מִפּוֹ וְאֵילוֹ וְאֵלָמוֹ הָיָה כְּמִדַּת הַשַּׁעַר הָרִאשׁוֹן חֲמִשִּׁים אֲמָה אָרְכוֹ וְרֹחַב חֲמִשׁ וָעֶשְׂרִים בָּאַמָּה:</p>	<p>21a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p>	<p>Its recesses, three on either side, and its pilasters and its vestibule were of the same size as those of the first gate; its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.</p>
<p><וְחַלּוֹנוֹת אֵלָמוֹ>⁹ וְתִמְרוֹ כְּמִדַּת הַשַּׁעַר אֲשֶׁר פָּנָיו דָּרָךְ הַקָּדִים וּבְמַעְלֹת שְׁבַע יַעֲלוּ-בּוֹ וְאֵילָמוֹ לִפְנֵיהֶם:</p>	<p>22a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p>	<p><The windows of its vestibule> and its palm trees were of the same size as those of the gate that faced toward the east; and seven steps led up to it; and its vestibule was before them/on the inside.</p>
<p>וְשַׁעַר לַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִי נֹגֵד הַשַּׁעַר לַצָּפוֹן וְלַקָּדִים וַיִּמַד מִשַּׁעַר אֶל-שַׁעַר מֵאֵה אֲמָה:</p>	<p>23a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>And opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court; and he measured from gate to gate, one hundred cubits.</p>
<p>וַיּוֹלֶכְנִי דָרָךְ הַדָּרוֹם וְהִנֵּה-שַׁעַר דָּרָךְ הַדָּרוֹם וַיִּמַד אֵילוֹ וְאֵילָמוֹ כְּמִדַּת הָאֵלָה:</p>	<p>24a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate on the south; and he measured its pilasters and its vestibule: the same size as the others.</p>
<p>וְחַלּוֹנִים לוֹ וְלֵאילָמוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב כְּהַחֲלָנוֹת הָאֵלָה חֲמִשִּׁים אֲמָה אָרְךָ וְרֹחַב חֲמִשׁ וָעֶשְׂרִים אֲמָה:</p>	<p>25a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And there were windows all around in it and in its vestibule, like the windows of the others; its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.</p>
<p>וּמַעְלֹת שְׁבַע עֲלוֹתוֹ וְאֵילָמוֹ לִפְנֵיהֶם וְתִמְרִים לוֹ אֶחָד מִפּוֹ וְאֶחָד מִפּוֹ אֶל-אֵילוֹ:</p>	<p>26a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And seven steps were leading up to it, and its vestibule was before them; and it had palm trees on its pilasters, one on either side.</p>
<p>וְשַׁעַר לַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִי דָרָךְ הַדָּרוֹם וַיִּמַד מִשַּׁעַר אֶל-הַשַּׁעַר דָּרָךְ הַדָּרוֹם מֵאֵה אֲמוֹת:</p>	<p>27a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>And there was a gate on the south of the inner court; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, one hundred cubits.</p>
<p>וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל-הַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִי בַשַּׁעַר הַדָּרוֹם וַיִּמַד אֶת-הַשַּׁעַר הַדָּרוֹם כְּמִדַּת הָאֵלָה:</p>	<p>28a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate, and he measured the south gate: the same size as the others;</p>
<p>וְתֵאוּ וְאֵילוֹ וְאֵילָמוֹ כְּמִדַּת הָאֵלָה וְחַלּוֹנוֹת לוֹ וְלֵאילָמוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב כְּהַחֲלָנוֹת הָאֵלָה חֲמִשִּׁים אֲמָה אָרְךָ וְרֹחַב עֶשְׂרִים וְחֲמִשׁ אֲמוֹת:</p>	<p>29a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p>	<p>Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule: the same size as the others; and windows were all around in it and in its vestibule; / its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.</p>
<p><¹⁰></p>	<p>30</p>	<p><...></p>

⁹ MT: וְחַלּוֹנוֹ וְאֵילָמוֹ. Emendation recommended by most scholars, e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 435; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 988; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 526; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 37.

¹⁰ Verse 30 MT: וְאֵילָמוֹת סָבִיב סָבִיב אָרְךָ חֲמִשׁ וָעֶשְׂרִים אֲמָה וְרֹחַב חֲמִשׁ אֲמוֹת: (There were vestibules all around, twenty-five cubits deep and five cubits wide.) is omitted by LXX and even by some of the Hebrew manuscripts. The sentence seems in fact meaningless and is widely regarded as a faulty

ואלמו אל־הַצֵּר הַחִיצוֹנָה וְתַמְרִים אֶל־אֵילָיו וּמַעְלֹת שְׁמוֹנֶה מַעְלוֹ	31a b c	Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its pilasters, and its stairway had eight steps.
וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־הַצֵּר הַפְּנִימִי דְרָךְ הַקָּדִים וַיִּמַּד אֶת־הַשַּׁעַר כַּמְדוֹת הָאֵלֶּה:	32a b	Then he brought me to the inner court to the east, and he measured the gate: the same size as the others.
וְתָאוּ וְאֵילָיו וְאֶלְמוֹ כַּמְדוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְחַלּוֹנוֹת לּוֹ וְלֶאֱלָמוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב אֶרְךָ חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה וְרָחֵב חֲמִשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה:	33a b c d	Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule: the same size as the others; and windows were all around in it and in its vestibule; / its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.
וְאֶלְמוֹ לְהַצֵּר הַחִיצוֹנָה וְתַמְרִים אֶל־אֵלוֹ מִפּוֹ וּמִפּוֹ וּשְׁמוֹנֶה מַעְלֹת מַעְלוֹ	34a b c	Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.
וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־שַׁעַר הַצָּפוֹן וַיִּמַּד כַּמְדוֹת הָאֵלֶּה:	35a b	Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it: the same size as the others.
תָּאוּ אֵלָיו וְאֶלְמוֹ וְחַלּוֹנוֹת לּוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב אֶרְךָ חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה וְרָחֵב חֲמִשׁ וְעֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה:	36a b c d	Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule ... and windows were all around in it; its length was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits.
<וְאֶלְמוֹ> ¹¹ לְהַצֵּר הַחִיצוֹנָה וְתַמְרִים אֶל־אֵילָיו מִפּוֹ וּמִפּוֹ וּשְׁמוֹנֶה מַעְלֹת מַעְלוֹ	37a b c	Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.
וְלִשְׁכָּה וּפְתָחָהּ <בְּאוֹלֵם הַשַּׁעַר> ¹² (שָׁם יִדְּחוּ אֶת־הָעֹלָה):	38ap a b	And a chamber, its entrance was <in the vestibule of the gate,> (where the burnt offering was to be washed.
וּבְאוֹלֵם הַשַּׁעַר שְׁנַיִם שְׁלֹחַנוֹת מִפּוֹ וּשְׁנַיִם שְׁלֹחַנוֹת מִפָּה) ¹³ לְשַׁחוֹט אֲלֵיהֶם הָעוֹלָה וְהַחֲטָאת וְהָאֲשָׁם:	39a b	And in the vestibule of the gate were two tables on either side,) on which the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered.
וְאֶל־הַפֶּתַח מִחוּצָה לְעוֹלָה לְפָתַח הַשַּׁעַר הַצָּפוֹנָה שְׁנַיִם שְׁלֹחַנוֹת וְאֶל־הַפֶּתַח הָאֲחֵרָת אֲשֶׁר לְאוֹלֵם הַשַּׁעַר שְׁנַיִם שְׁלֹחַנוֹת:	40a b ₁ c b ₂	And on the outside of the vestibule at the entrance of the north gate were two tables; and on the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables.
אַרְבָּעָה שְׁלֹחַנוֹת מִפָּה וְאַרְבָּעָה שְׁלֹחַנוֹת מִפָּה לְכַתֵּף הַשַּׁעַר שְׁמוֹנֶה שְׁלֹחַנוֹת אֲלֵיהֶם יִשְׁחָטוּ:	41a b c	Four tables were on the inside, and four tables on the outside of the side of the gate, eight tables, on which they slaughter.
וְאַרְבָּעָה שְׁלֹחַנוֹת לְעוֹלָה אֲבָנֵי גִזִּית אֶרְךָ אַמָּה אַחַת וְחֻצִי וְרָחֵב אַמָּה אַחַת וְחֻצִי וְגִבָּה אַמָּה אַחַת	42a b c d	And four tables of hewn stone were for the burnt offering; / they were a cubit and a half long, and one cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high,

doublet of the previous v. 29; e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 436; Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 18; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 538; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 989; Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 302; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 222; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 528; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 37.

¹¹ Correcting MT וְאֵילָיו (its pilaster) with LXX τὰ αὐλαμμοῦ (its vestibule); with Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 989; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 37.

¹² MT has שְׁעָרִים הַשַּׁעַר but this is grammatically and contextually not possible. There is a consensus on the emendation. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 437; Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 154; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1021; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 222; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 530; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 42.

¹³ 40:38b, 39a is absent in LXX, but since at least 39a is presupposed by 39b it seems that MT has the correct text. Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 154; in Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 42.

אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּנְיְחוּ אֶת־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁחֹטוּ אֶת־הָעוֹלָה בָּם וְהַזְבִּיחַ:	e _p e f	on these they lay the instruments with which they slaughter the burnt offerings and the sacrifices.
וְהַשְּׁפָתִים טַפַּח אֶחָד מִוְכָנִים בְּכִיַּת סָבִיב סָבִיב וְאֶל־הַשְּׁלֹחָנוֹת בָּשֶׁר הַקָּרְבָּן: ¹⁴	43a b	And pegs, one handwidth long, were fastened all around the inside; and on the tables the flesh of the offering.
וּמַחוּצָה לַשַּׁעַר הַפְּנִימִי לְשִׁכּוֹת <שְׁתֵּי> ¹⁵ בְּחֻצֵי הַפְּנִימִי <אֶחָד> אֶל־פְּתוֹף שַׁעַר הַצָּפוֹן וּפְנִיָהּ דָּרָךְ הַדְּרוֹם אֶחָד אֶל־פְּתוֹף שַׁעַר <הַדְּרוֹם> פְּנִי דָּרָךְ הַצָּפוֹן:	44a b c	And on the outside of the inner gate, there were <two> chambers in the inner court, <one> at the side of the north gate facing towards the south, one at the side of the <south> gate facing towards the north.
וַיֹּדֶבֶר אֵלַי זֶה הַלְשֵׁכָה אֲשֶׁר פְּנִיָּהּ דָּרָךְ הַדְּרוֹם לְכַהֲנָנִים שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁמֶרֶת הַבַּיִת:	45a b ₁ c b ₂	And he told me: “This chamber that faces toward the south is for the priests who have charge of the temple,
וְהַלְשֵׁכָה אֲשֶׁר פְּנִיָּהּ דָּרָךְ הַצָּפוֹן לְכַהֲנָנִים שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁמֶרֶת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הֵמָּה בְּנֵי־צִדּוֹק הַקְּרָבִים מִבְּנֵי־לֵוִי אֲלֵי־יְהוָה לְשָׁרְתוֹ:	46a ₁ b a ₂ c	and the chamber that faces towards the north is for the priests who have charge of the altar; these are the descendants of Zadok, who alone among the descendants of Levi may come near to YHWH to minister to him.
וַיִּמַּד אֶת־הַחֻצַּיִר אָרְבַּע מֵאָה אַמָּה וְרֹחַב מֵאָה אַמָּה מִרְבַּעַת וְהַמִּזְבֵּחַ לִפְנֵי הַבַּיִת:	47a b c d	And he measured the court, a hundred cubits long, and a hundred cubits wide, a square; and the altar was in front of the temple.
וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־אֵלֶם הַבַּיִת וַיִּמַּד <אֵיל> אֵלֶם ¹⁶ חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת מִפֶּה וְחֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת מִפֶּה וְרֹחַב הַשַּׁעַר שְׁלֹשׁ אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ וְשְׁלֹשׁ אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ: ¹⁷	48a b c	Then he brought me to the vestibule of the temple and measured the <pilaster> of the vestibule, five cubits on either side; and the width of the gate [was fourteen cubits; and the sidewalls of the gate were] three cubits on either side.
אָרְבַּע הָאֵלֶם עֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה וְרֹחַב שְׁתֵּי עֶשְׂרֵה ¹⁸ אַמָּה וּבַמַּעֲלֹת אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלוּ אֵלָיו וְעַמֻּדִים אֶל־הָאֵילִים אֶחָד מִפֶּה וְאֶחָד מִפֶּה:	49a b c _p d c	The length of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the width twelve cubits; and at the steps, which led up to it, there were pillars beside the pilasters, one on either side.

¹⁴ LXX offers a different, longer text for v. 43b; Lust, “Exegesis and Theology,” 207. The MT seems however to have preserved the original; Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 159f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1027; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 222; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 43.

¹⁵ Following LXX in counting “two chambers”. MT reads לְשִׁכּוֹת שְׁרִים, which does not make sense. Analogously, it seems more appropriate, with LXX, to change אֲשֶׁר in 44b to אֶחָד (as in 44c) and הַקְּדָיִם in 44c into הַדְּרוֹם. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 223; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 44f.

¹⁶ Reconstructed according to LXX (τὸ αὐλ τοῦ αὐλαμ); with Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 990; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 223. MT has אֵל אֵלֶם.

¹⁷ On account of the measured dimensions, there seems to be some text missing in MT. The translation follows therefore LXX: καὶ τὸ εὖρος τοῦ θυρώματος πηχῶν δέκα τεσσαρῶν καὶ ἐπωμίδες τῆς θύρας τοῦ αὐλαμ πηχῶν τριῶν ἐνθεν καὶ πηχῶν τριῶν ἐνθεν. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 990; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 539; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 49.

¹⁸ LXX reads πηχῶν δώδεκα (12 cubits) instead of MT’s עֶשְׂתֵּי עֶשְׂרֵה (11 cubits). This fits better in the overall description and is therefore favoured by most authors, e.g. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 440; Gese,

<p>וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־הַהִיכָל וַיִּמַּד אֶת־הָאֵילִים שֵׁשׁ־אַמּוֹת רָחֵב־מִפּוֹ וְשֵׁשׁ־אַמּוֹת־רָחֵב מִפּוֹ רָחֵב <הָאֵילִים>:¹⁹</p>	<p>41:1a Then he brought me to the nave, b and he measured the pilasters; c six cubits on each side was the width of the pilasters.</p>
<p>וְרָחֵב הַפֶּתַח עָשָׂר אַמּוֹת וְכַתְּפוֹת הַפֶּתַח חֲמִשָּׁ אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ וְחֲמִשָּׁ אַמּוֹת מִפּוֹ וַיִּמַּד אָרְכּוֹ אַרְבַּעִים אַמָּה וְרָחֵב עָשָׂרִים אַמָּה:</p>	<p>2a And the width of the entrance was ten cubits; b and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on c either side; d and he measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits.</p>
<p>וַיָּבֵא לְפָנַיִמָּה וַיִּמַּד אֵיל־הַפֶּתַח שְׁתֵּי אַמּוֹת וְהַפֶּתַח שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת וְרָחֵב הַפֶּתַח שִׁבְעַת אַמּוֹת:²⁰</p>	<p>3a Then he went inside b and he measured the pilasters of the entrance, two c cubits; / and the width of the entrance, six cubits; d and the sidewalls of the entrance, seven cubits.</p>
<p>וַיִּמַּד אֶת־אָרְכּוֹ עָשָׂרִים אַמָּה וְרָחֵב עָשָׂרִים אַמָּה אֶל־פְּנֵי הַהִיכָל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי זֶה קֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים:</p>	<p>4a And he measured the length, twenty cubits, b and its width, twenty cubits, beyond the nave. c And he said to me, d This is the most holy place.</p>
<p>וַיִּמַּד קִיר־הַבַּיִת שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת וְרָחֵב הַצֵּלַע אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת סָבִיב סָבִיב לְבַיִת סָבִיב:</p>	<p>5a Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits b thick; / and the width of the side chamber, four c cubits, all around the temple.</p>
<p>וְהַצֵּלְעוֹת צִלְעֵ אֶל־צִלְעֵ שְׁלוֹשׁ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים פְּעָמִים וּבְאֹת בְּקִיר אֲשֶׁר־לְבַיִת לְצִלְעוֹת סָבִיב סָבִיב לְהִיּוֹת אַחֲזוּזִים וְלֹא־יִהְיוּ אַחֲזוּזִים בְּקִיר הַבַּיִת:</p>	<p>6a And the side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. b₁ There were offsets all around the wall c of the temple b₂ to serve as supports for the side chambers, d so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple.</p>
<p>וַרְחֵבָהּ וַנִּסְבָּהּ לְמַעְלָה לְמַעְלָה לְצִלְעוֹת כִּי מוֹסְבֵי־הַבַּיִת לְמַעְלָה לְמַעְלָה סָבִיב סָבִיב לְבַיִת עַל־כֵּן רָחֵב־לְבַיִת לְמַעְלָה וְכֵן הִתְחַזְּקוּנָה יַעֲלֶה עַל־הַעֲקִילוּנָה לְתִיכּוּנָה:</p>	<p>7a And it became broader b and turned upwards to the sides, c because it was surrounding the temple upwards, all around the temple; d therefore the temple was larger towards upwards, e and so one went up from the bottom story to the uppermost story through by way of the middle one.</p>
<p><וְתִרְאִיל>²¹ לְבַיִת גְּבֵה סָבִיב סָבִיב מִסְדּוֹת הַצֵּלְעוֹת מְלוֹ הַקְּנָה שֵׁשׁ אַמּוֹת אֲצִילָה:</p>	<p>8a And the “tra’el” for the temple was raised all around; / the foundations of the side chambers b measured a full reed of six long cubits.</p>

Verfassungsentwurf, 23; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 990; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 539; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 50.

¹⁹ Although MT, T, S, and V attest for רָחֵב הָאֵהָל (the width of the tent), this reading does not make sense in the present context; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 539. The text is reconstructed after LXX; by some, the phrase is at any rate considered a gloss (see Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 50).

²⁰ LXX has a slightly longer reading of this verse; see Lust, “Exegesis and Theology,” 207. LXX portrays the most holy place as “inner courtyard” (which, in v. 4 LXX, is twice as long as in MT). The argument by Adrian Schenker, “Das Allerheiligste in Ezechiels Tempel war ein Hof: Die Tragweite der ursprünglichen Septuaginta in Ez 41,1-4,” in *Interpreting Translation: Studies on the LXX and Ezekiel in Honour of Johan Lust*, ed. F. García Martínez and M. Vervenne, BETL 192 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 366-369 for the priority of LXX is not convincing; see, on the contrary, Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 50.

²¹ LXX reads καὶ τὸ θραελ, which obviously transcribes an unknown architectonic term, presumably a highened platform or pedestal. MT וַיִּרְאֵי “and I saw” probably derives from the misspelling of this term (reconstructed תרעל or תראיל or similar). Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 53, with reference to Gese, *Verfassungsentwurf*, 169f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1031.

<p>רָחֵב הַקִּיר אֲשֶׁר-לְצִלְעֵ אֶל-הַחוּץ חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת וְאֲשֶׁר מִנְּחָ <בֵּין הַצִּלְעוֹת>²² אֲשֶׁר לְבַיִת:</p>	<p>9a₁ b a₂ c d</p>	<p>The thickness of the wall, that was on the outside of the side chambers was five cubits; and the free space between the side chambers that belong to the temple</p>
<p>וּבֵּין הַלְּשָׁכוֹת רָחֵב עֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה סָבִיב לְבַיִת סָבִיב סָבִיב:</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>and the chambers [of the court] was a width of twenty cubits around the temple, all around.</p>
<p>וּפְתַח הַצִּלְעֵ לַמִּנְחָ פָּתַח אֶחָד דָּרָךְ הַצָּפוֹן וּפְתַח אֶחָד לְדָרוֹם וְרָחֵב מְקוֹם הַמִּנְחָ חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת סָבִיב סָבִיב:</p>	<p>11a b c d</p>	<p>And the entrance of the side chambers was toward the free space, / one entrance toward the north, and one entrance toward the south; and the width of the free space was five cubits all around.</p>
<p>וְהַבְּנִיָּן אֲשֶׁר אֶל-פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה פָּאֵת דָּרָךְ-הַיָּם רָחֵב שִׁבְעִים אַמָּה וְקִיר הַבְּנִיָּן חֲמִשׁ-אַמּוֹת רָחֵב סָבִיב סָבִיב וְאָרְכוֹ תִּשְׁעִים אַמָּה:</p>	<p>12a₁ b a₂ c d</p>	<p>And the building that was facing the vacant area on the west side was seventy cubits wide; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its length ninety cubits.</p>
<p>וַיִּמְדַּד אֶת-הַבַּיִת אַרְבָּע מֵאוֹת אַמָּה וְהַגְּזֵרָה וְהַבְּנִיָּה וְקִירוֹתֶיהָ אַרְבָּע מֵאוֹת אַמָּה:</p>	<p>13a b</p>	<p>Then he measured the temple, one hundred cubits long; / and the vacant area and the building with its walls, one hundred cubits long;</p>
<p>וְרָחֵב פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת וְהַגְּזֵרָה לְקִדְמַי מֵאוֹת אַמָּה:</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>and the width of the east front of the temple and the vacant area, one hundred cubits.</p>
<p>וַיִּמְדַּד אַרְבָּע-הַבְּנִיָּן אֶל-פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-אַחֲרֶיהָ וְאֶת-הַקִּיָּהּ מִפּוֹ וּמִפּוֹ מֵאוֹת אַמָּה</p>	<p>15a₁ b a₂</p>	<p>Then he measured the length of the building facing the vacant area, / which was at the west, and galleries on either side, one hundred cubits.</p>
<p>וְהַהִיכָל הַפְּנִימִי <וְאֵלֶם הַחִיצוֹן>²³:</p>	<p>c</p>	<p>The inner temple nave and <the outer vestibule></p>
<p><סְפוּנִים>²⁴ וְהַחֲלוֹנִים הָאֵטוּמוֹת וְהָאֵתִיקִים סָבִיב נֶגֶד הַסָּף שָׁחִיף עֵץ סָבִיב לְשִׁלְשָׁתָם סָבִיב וְהָאֲרָץ עַד-הַחֲלֹנוֹת וְהַחֲלֹנוֹת מְכֻסּוֹת:</p>	<p>16a b c d e</p>	<p><were panelled> and all three had closed windows and galleries all around; / opposite to the threshold were wood panels all around; from the floor up to the windows – the windows, though, were covered –</p>
<p>עַל-מַעַל הַפְּתַח וְעַד-הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי וְלַחוּץ וְאֶל-כָּל-הַקִּיר סָבִיב סָבִיב בַּפְּנִימִי וּבַחִיצוֹן (מְדוֹת):</p>	<p>17a b</p>	<p>to the space above the entrance, and to the inner room, and on the outside. And on all the walls all around, on the inside and on the outside, were (patterns)</p>
<p>וְעֵשׂוּי כְּרוּבִים וְתַמָּרִים וְתַמָּרָה בֵּין-כְּרוּב לְכְרוּב וּשְׁנַיִם פָּנִים לְכְרוּב:</p>	<p>18a b c</p>	<p>formed of cherubim and palm trees: a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Each cherub had two faces:</p>
<p>וּפְנֵי אָדָם אֶל-הַתַּמָּרָה מִפּוֹ וּפְנֵי-לִיֹּן קָטָן אֶל-הַתַּמָּרָה מִפּוֹ עֵשׂוּי אֶל-כָּל-הַבַּיִת סָבִיב סָבִיב:</p>	<p>19a b c</p>	<p>a human face toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around;</p>

²² The reading of LXX (ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν πλευρῶν) is to be preferred over MT בית צלעות, which seems to be a scribal error. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1031; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 224; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 546.

²³ Reconstructed with LXX τὸ αἶλαμ τὸ ἐξώτερον; for MT (וְאֵלֶם הַחִיצוֹן) is meaningless here. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1043f; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 224; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 59.

²⁴ Following LXX instead of MT הַסָּפִים, with Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1044; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 224; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 59. Overall, vv. 16-17 are “completely obscure” for Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 307.

מִהָאָרֶץ עַד־מַעַל הַפֶּתַח הַכְּרוּבִים וְהַתְּמָרִים עָשׂוּיִם וְקִיר <25>:	20	from the floor to above the entrance, the cherubim and the palm trees were carved. On the wall < >
הַהֵיכָל מְזוּזוֹת רִבְעָה וּפְנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַמְרָאָה כַּמְרָאָה:	21a b	of the nave there were squared doorposts; and in front of the holy place was something resembling
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עֵץ שְׁלוֹשׁ אַמּוֹת גְּבוּהָ וְאַרְכּוֹ שְׁתַּיִם־אַמּוֹת וּמְקַצְעוֹתָיו לוֹ וְאַרְכּוֹ וְקִירָתָיו עֵץ וַיֹּדַבֵּר אֵלַי זֶה הַשֻּׁלְחָן אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:	22a b c d e f	an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits long; and it had its corners, and its length/base, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that stands before YHWH."
וְשַׁתַּיִם דְּלֹתוֹת לַהֵיכָל וְלַקֹּדֶשׁ:	23	The nave and the holy place had each two doors:
וְשַׁתַּיִם דְּלֹתוֹת לְדֹלְתוֹת שְׁתַּיִם מוֹסְבּוֹת דְּלֹתוֹת שְׁתַּיִם לְדֹלֶת אַחַת וְשַׁתַּיִ דְּלֹתוֹת לְאַחֶרֶת:	24a b c	two leaves for each of the two swinging doors; two leaves for one door and two leaves for the other.
וַעֲשׂוּיָהּ אֲלֵיהֶן אֶל־דְּלֹתוֹת הַהֵיכָל כְּרוּבִים וְתְמָרִים כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּיִם לְקִירוֹת וְעַב עֵץ אֶל־פְּנֵי הָאוּלָם מִחֻוּץ:	25a b c	And on the doors of the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were carved on the walls; / and there was a canopy of wood in front of the vestibule outside.
וְחַלּוֹנִים אֲטֻמּוֹת וְתְמָרִים מִפוֹ וּמִפוֹ אֶל־כְּתָפוֹת הָאוּלָם וְצִלְעוֹת הַבַּיִת וְהָעַבִּים:	26	And there were closed windows and palm trees on either side, on the sidewalls of the vestibule, and on the side chambers of the temple, and on the canopy.
וַיּוֹצֵאֵנִי אֶל־הַחֲצָר הַחַיצוֹנָה (הַדְּרָה) דְּרָה הַצָּפוֹן וַיְבִאֵנִי אֶל־הַלְּשֶׁכָּה אֲשֶׁר נֹגֵד הַגְּזֵרָה וְאֲשֶׁר־נֹגֵד הַבְּנִין אֶל־ הַצָּפוֹן:	42:1a b c d	Then he led me out into the outer court, toward the north, and he brought me to the chamber that was opposite the vacant area and opposite the building on the north.
אֶל־פְּנֵי־אֲרָךְ אַמּוֹת הַמָּאָה פֶּתַח הַצָּפוֹן וְהָרְחֵב חֲמִשִּׁים אַמּוֹת:	2a b	At the front, the length was one hundred cubits, and the width fifty cubits.
נֹגֵד הָעֵשָׂרִים אֲשֶׁר לְחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִי וְנֹגֵד רִצְפָה אֲשֶׁר לְחֲצָר הַחַיצוֹנָה אֲתִיק אֶל־פְּנֵי־אֲתִיק בְּשָׁלְשֵׁים:	3a ₁ b a ₂ c a ₃	Facing the twenty cubits which belonged to the inner court, and facing the pavement which belonged to the outer court, gallery fronted gallery in three stories.
וּלְפָנָי הַלְּשֶׁכּוֹת מִהֶלֶד עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹת רָחֵב אֶל־הַפְּנִימִית <וְאֲרָךְ מֵאָה אַמּוֹת> ²⁶ וּפִתְחֵיהֶם לְצָפוֹן:	4a b	And in front of the chambers was a passage on the inner side, ten cubits wide <and one hundred cubits long>, and their entrances were on the north.
וְהַלְּשֶׁכּוֹת הָעֲלִיוֹנָת קָצְרוֹת כִּי־יֹכְלוּ אֲתִיקִים מִהֶנָּה מִהַתְּחַתְּנוֹת וּמִהַתְּכַנּוֹת בְּנִין:	5a b	Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers in the building.
כִּי מִשְׁלֹשׁוֹת הֵנָּה וְאֵין לָהֶן עַמּוּדִים כְּעַמּוּדֵי הַחֲצָרוֹת עַל־כֵּן נֶאֱצַל מִהַתְּחַתְּנוֹת וּמִהַתְּכַנּוֹת מִהָאָרֶץ:	6a b c	For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones.

²⁵ MT duplicates הַהֵיכָל from 41:21a at the end of v. 20b. The extraordinary punctuation in the MT shows that already the Masoretes suspected dittography. LXX, S, V represent the word only once. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1045; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 225; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 60.

²⁶ Following LXX, over against MT אַחַת אֶמָּה אֶמָּה; with Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1055f; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 63.

וְגֵדֵר אֲשֶׁר־לְחוּצָה לְעִמַּת הַלְשָׁכוֹת דָּרָךְ הַחֲצוֹנָה אֶל־פְּנֵי הַלְשָׁכוֹת אָרְכוֹ חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה:	7a _p b a	And a wall that was outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, its length was fifty cubits.
כִּי־אָרְךָ הַלְשָׁכוֹת אֲשֶׁר לְחֻצֵי הַחֲצוֹנָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה <וְהֵנָּה עַל־פְּנֵיהֶן הַכֹּל> ²⁷ מֵאָה אַמָּה:	8a ₁ b a ₂ c d	For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, <and these are facing each other; the whole> one hundred cubits.
וּמִתְחַתֶּיהָ לְשָׁכוֹת הָאֵלֶּה הַמְּבֹאֵה מִהַקְדִּים כְּבָאוּ לְהֵנָּה מִהַחֲצֵר הַחֲצוֹנָה:	9a b	And the lowest of these chambers had the entering from the east, as one enters them from the outer court.
בְּרוֹחַב גֵּדֵר הַחֲצֵר דָּרָךְ <הַדְרוֹם> ²⁸ אֶל־פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה וְאֶל־פְּנֵי הַבְּנָיִן לְשָׁכוֹת:	10	Along the width of the court wall toward <south>, opposite the vacant area and opposite the building, there were chambers
וְדָרָךְ לְפָנֵיהֶם כְּמֵרֵאֵה הַלְשָׁכוֹת אֲשֶׁר דָּרָךְ הַצָּפוֹן כְּאָרְכָן כֵּן רָחְבָן וְכָל מוֹצְאֵיהֶן וְכַמְשֻׁפְטֵיהֶן וְכַפְתָּחֵיהֶן:	11a b c	with a passageway in front of them, similar to the chambers, / which are on the north, of the same length and width, with the same exits and arrangements and entrances.
וּכְפְתָחֵי הַלְשָׁכוֹת אֲשֶׁר דָּרָךְ הַדְרוֹם פְּתַח בְּרֵאשׁ דָּרָךְ דָּרָךְ בְּפְנֵי הַגְּזֵרָת הַגִּינָה דָּרָךְ הַקְדִּים כְּבֹאֵן:	12a ₁ b a ₂	And likewise, the entrances of the chambers that faced the south side, were entered through an entrance at the head of the corresponding passage, from the east, along the matching wall.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לְשָׁכוֹת הַצָּפוֹן לְשָׁכוֹת הַדְרוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶל־פְּנֵי הַגְּזֵרָה הֵנָּה לְשָׁכוֹת הַקְדָּשׁ אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכְלוּ־שָׁם הַכֹּהֲנִים אֲשֶׁר־קְרוֹבִים לַיהוָה קֹדְשֵׁי הַקְדָּשִׁים שָׁם יִנְיְחוּ קֹדְשֵׁי הַקְדָּשִׁים וְהַמִּנְחָה וְהַחֲטָאֹת וְהָאָשָׁם כִּי הַמָּקוֹם קֹדֵשׁ:	13a b _p c b d ₁ e d ₂ f g	Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the vacant area, these are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach YHWH shall eat the most holy offerings; there they shall deposit the most holy offerings: the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, / for the place is holy.
כְּבָאֵם הַכֹּהֲנִים וְלֹא־יֵצְאוּ מִהַקְדָּשׁ אֶל־הַחֲצֵר הַחֲצוֹנָה וְשָׁם יִנְיְחוּ בְגָדֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׁרְתוּ בָהֶן כִּי־קֹדֵשׁ הֵנָּה לְבָשׁוּ בְגָדִים אֲחֵרִים וְקָרְבוּ אֶל־אֲשֶׁר לְעָם: ²⁹	14a _p a b c d e f g	When the priests enter the holy place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court there they shall lay the vestments, in which they minister, for these are holy; they shall put on other vestments and then they may go near to the area that is for the people.”

²⁷ Emendation with LXX. MT: וְהֵנָּה עַל־פְּנֵי הַיְכָל (behold, opposite the temple, a hundred cubits long). Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1057; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 226; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 63.

²⁸ LXX's reading πρὸς νότον (towards south) fits better in the context than MT הַקְדָּשִׁים; with Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 458; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1057; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 226; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 562; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 63.

²⁹ LXX seems to depend on another *Vorlage* for this verse, or to paraphrase freely. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1058; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 63 are in favour of the MT.

<p>וְכָלָה אֶת־מְדוֹת הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי</p> <p>וְהוֹצִיאֲנִי דְרָוּךְ הַשָּׁעַר</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר פָּנָיו דְרָוּךְ הַקְּדִים</p> <p>וּמָדָדוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב:</p>	<p>15a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p>	<p>And when he had finished measuring the interior temple [area],</p> <p>he led me out by the gate</p> <p>that faces toward the east,</p> <p>and measured all around.</p>
<p>מָדַד רוּחַ הַקְּדִים בְּקִנְיַת הַמְּדָה</p> <p>חֲמִשָּׁ־מְאוֹת <קִנְיִים> בְּקִנְיַת הַמְּדָה</p> <p>סָבִיב:³⁰</p>	<p>16a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>He measured the east side with the measuring reed,</p> <p>five <hundred> (reeds) around by the measuring reed.</p>
<p>מָדַד רוּחַ הַצָּפוֹן</p> <p>חֲמִשָּׁ־מְאוֹת (קִנְיִים) בְּקִנְיַת הַמְּדָה</p> <p>סָבִיב:</p>	<p>17a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>He measured the north side,</p> <p>five hundred (reeds) around by the measuring reed.</p>
<p>אֵת רוּחַ הַדְּרוֹם מָדַד</p> <p>חֲמִשָּׁ־מְאוֹת (קִנְיִים) בְּקִנְיַת הַמְּדָה:</p>	<p>18a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>The south side he measured,</p> <p>five hundred (reeds) by the measuring reed.</p>
<p>סָבַב אֶל־רוּחַ הַיָּם</p> <p>מָדַד חֲמִשָּׁ־מְאוֹת (קִנְיִים) בְּקִנְיַת הַמְּדָה:</p>	<p>19a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>He turned to the west side;</p> <p>he measured five hundred (reeds) by the measuring reed.</p>
<p>לְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת מָדָדוֹ</p> <p>חוֹמָה לוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב</p> <p>אָרְוֶה חֲמִשָּׁ מְאוֹת</p> <p>וְרֹחַב חֲמִשָּׁ מְאוֹת</p> <p>לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְחָל:</p>	<p>20a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p> <p>e</p>	<p>He measured it on the four sides.</p> <p>It had a wall around it,</p> <p>five hundred long</p> <p>and five hundred wide,</p> <p>to make a separation between the holy and the common.</p>
<p>וַיֹּלֶכְנִי אֶל־הַשָּׁעַר</p> <p>שֶׁעַר אֲשֶׁר פָּנָה דְרָוּךְ הַקְּדִים:</p>	<p>43:1a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>Then he brought me to the gate,</p> <p>the gate facing east.</p>
<p>וַהֲנֵה כְבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא מִדְרָוּךְ הַקְּדִים</p> <p>וְקוֹלוֹ כְּקוֹל מַיִם רַבִּים³¹</p> <p>וְהָאֶרֶץ הָאֵרָה מִכְבוֹדוֹ:</p>	<p>2a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And behold, the Glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east;</p> <p>and his sound was like the sound of mighty waters;</p> <p>and the earth shone with his glory.</p>
<p>וַיִּכְמַרְאֶה (כְּמַרְאֶה) הַמְּרָאָה</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי</p> <p>כְּמַרְאֶה</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר־רָאִיתִי בְּבֹאִי לְשַׁחַת אֶת־הָעִיר</p> <p>וּמְרָאוֹת³² (כְּמַרְאֶה)</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי אֶל־נְהַר־כְּבָר</p> <p>וָאֶפֶל אֶל־פָּנָי:</p>	<p>3a₁</p> <p>b</p> <p>a₂</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p> <p>e</p> <p>f</p>	<p>And the (appearance of the) sight that I saw</p> <p>was like the sight that I had seen when I came to destroy the city,</p> <p>and the vision was like (the sight) that I had seen by the river Chebar;</p> <p>and I fell upon my face.</p>
<p>וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה בָּא אֶל־הַבַּיִת דְרָוּךְ שֶׁעַר</p> <p>אֲשֶׁר פָּנָיו דְרָוּךְ הַקְּדִים:</p>	<p>4a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>And the Glory of YHWH entered the temple by the gate / that was facing toward the east,</p>
<p>וַתִּשְׂאֲנִי רוּחַ</p> <p>וַתְּבִיאֲנִי אֶל־הַחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִי</p> <p>וַהֲנֵה מְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה הַבַּיִת:</p>	<p>5a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>And a spirit/wind lifted me up,</p> <p>and brought me into the inner court;</p> <p>and behold, the Glory of YHWH filled the temple.</p>
<p>וָאֲשָׁמַע מִדְּבַר אֵלֵי מִהַבַּיִת</p> <p>וָאִישׁ הָיָה עִמָּד אֶצְלִי:</p>	<p>6a</p> <p>b</p>	<p>I heard someone speaking to me out of the temple;</p> <p>while the man was standing beside me;</p>

³⁰ Also in 42:16-19, LXX differs considerably from the MT, which however remains reference text, except for the correction of *kethib* אָמוֹת in *qere* מְאוֹת. Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 459f; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1066f; Lust, "Exegesis and Theology," 207f; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 568f; Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen*, 67.

³¹ LXX's version of 43:2 is considerably longer than MT, betraying an exegetical interest in *merkābā* mysticism. For more details, see Lust, "Exegesis and Theology," 211-216.

³² Similar to the previous verse, LXX expands 43:3d to "and the vision of the chariot" (καὶ ἡ ὄρασις τοῦ ἄρματος) which already reflects a later interpretation of chaps 1 and 10 in terms of *merkābā* mysticism; *ibid.*, 208-210.

<p>וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי בְּנֵי־אָדָם אֶת־מְקוֹם פְּסָאִי וְאֶת־מְקוֹם פְּפוֹת רַגְלִי אֲשֶׁר אֲשָׁכֵן־שָׁם בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעוֹלָם וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ עוֹד בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמִי קְדוֹשִׁי הַמָּה וּמַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזוּנוֹתָם וּבַפְגְּרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם³³ בְּמוֹתָם:</p>	<p>7a and he said to me, b “Son of man, the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, c where I will reside among the people of Israel forever -- d no more shall the House of Israel defile my holy name, they and their kings, by their whoring, and by the corpses of their kings at their death.</p>
<p>בְּתֻתָם סָפִים אֶת־סָפֵי וּמְזוּזוֹתָם אֶצְלַל מְזוּזוֹתַי וְהִקִּיר בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיהֶם וְטִמְאוּ אֶת־שְׁמִי קְדוֹשִׁי בְּתוֹעֲבוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ וְאָכַל אֹתָם בְּאַפִּי:³⁴</p>	<p>8a By placing their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, b with only a wall between me and them, c they defiled my holy name by their abominations / that they committed, d and I have consumed them in my anger.</p>
<p>עַתָּה יִרְחֲקוּ אֶת־זְנוּתָם וּפְגְרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם מִמֶּנִּי וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם לְעוֹלָם: ס</p>	<p>9a Now they will put away their idolatry and the corpses of their kings far from me, b and I will reside among them forever.</p>
<p>אֲתָהּ בְּנֵי־אָדָם הַגֵּד אֶת־בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַבַּיִת וְיִכְלְמוּ מַעֲוֹתֵיהֶם וּמִדְדוּ אֶת־תְּקֻנָּתוֹ:³⁵</p>	<p>10a As for you, son of man, describe to the House of Israel the temple, b and they shall be ashamed of their iniquities c and they shall measure the proportions.”</p>
<p>וְאִם־נִכְלְמוּ מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ צוּרַת הַבַּיִת וּתְכוּנָתוֹ וּמוֹצְאָיו (וּמוֹבְאָיו וְכָל־צוּרָתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־חֻקֹּתָיו) וְכָל־צוּרָתוֹ וְכָל־תּוֹרָתוֹ הוֹדַע אֹתָם וּכְתַב לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־כָּל־צוּרָתוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־חֻקֹּתָיו וַעֲשׂוּ אוֹתָם:</p>	<p>11a “And if they are ashamed of all b that they have done, c make known to them the plan of the temple, its arrangement, its exits (and its entries, and its entire plan and all its ordinances,) and its entire plan and all its laws; d and write it down in their sight, e so that they may observe the entire plan and all its ordinances f and do them.</p>
<p>זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַבַּיִת עַל־רֹאשׁ הַהָר כָּל־גְּבֻלוֹ סָבִיב סָבִיב קְדֹשׁ קְדָשִׁים הִנֵּה־זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַבַּיִת:</p>	<p>12a This is the law of the temple: b the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. c Behold, this is the law of the temple.”</p>
	...

³³ LXX translates, here and similarly in 9a, ἐν τοῖς φόνοις τῶν ἡγουμένων ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν (by the murder of their leaders in their midst). Olley, *Ezekiel*, 520 sees this as a deliberate parallel to 8e (ἐν φόνῳ), which equals guilt and punishment, whereas Lust, “Exegesis and Theology, 216f. suggests that the translator was under the impression of contemporary events. In any case, MT appears to conserve the older reading.

³⁴ On the plusses in LXX here, see Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1072.

³⁵ For a discussion of the different readings in MT, LXX and a modern translation (RSV), see Stevenson, *Vision of Transformation*, 15-17.

וַיֵּשֶׁב אֹתִי דָרֶה שַׁעַר הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הַחִיצוֹן הַפְּנֵה קָדִים וְהוּא סָגוּר:	44: 1 a b	And he made me return to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי [יְהוָה] הַשַּׁעַר הַזֶּה סָגוּר יִהְיֶה לֹא יִפְתָּח וְאִישׁ לֹא־יָבֵא בּוֹ כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא בּוֹ וְהֵיכָל סָגוּר:	2a b c d e f	And [YHWH] said to me, "This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for YHWH, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut.
אֶת־הַנְּשִׂיאָה (נְשִׂיאָה) הוּא יֵשֵׁב־בּוֹ לֶאֱכֹל לֶחֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מִדְּרֹךְ אֵלֶם הַשַּׁעַר יָבֹא וּמִדְּרֹכּוֹ יֵצֵא:	3a p a b c	As for the prince, (because he is the prince) he may sit in it to eat bread before YHWH; by way of the vestibule of the gate he shall enter and by the same way he shall go out."
וַיְבִיאֵנִי דְרֹד־שַׁעַר הַצָּפוֹן אֶל־פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת וְאָרָא וְהִנֵּה מְלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה וָאֶפֶל אֶל־פָּנָי:	4a b c d	Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and I looked, and behold, the Glory of YHWH filled the temple of YHWH; and I fell upon my face.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה בְּנ־אָדָם שִׁים לְבָבְךָ וּרְאֵה בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּבְאָזְנוֹיךָ שְׁמַע אֵת כָּל־ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר אֵתְךָ לְכָל־חֻקֹּת בַּיִת־יְהוָה וּלְכָל־תּוֹרֹתָיו וּשְׁמַתָּ לְבָבְךָ לְמַבּוֹא הַבַּיִת כָּכֵל מוֹצְאֵי הַמִּקְדָּשׁ:	5a b c d e f	And YHWH said to me, "Son of man, set your heart, and see with your eyes, and with your ears hear all that I shall tell you concerning all the ordinances of the temple of YHWH and all its laws; and mark well those to be admitted to the temple and all those to be excluded from the sanctuary.
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֶל־מְרִי אֶל־בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה רַב־לָכֶם מִכָּל־תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל:	6a b c	And you shall say to the rebellious, to the House of Israel, Thus says the Lord YHWH: Enough of all your abominations, o House of Israel!
כִּי־בִיאְכֶם בְּנִי־נֹכַר עָרְלִי־לֵב וְעָרְלֵי בָשָׂר לְהִיּוֹת בְּמִקְדָּשִׁי לְחַלְלוֹ אֶת־בַּיִתִּי כִּי־קָרַיְכֶם אֶת־לֶחְמִי חֵלֶב וְדָם וַיִּפְרוּ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אֵל כָּל־תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם:	7a b	When you admitted foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to profane it, my house, when you offered to me my food, the fat and the blood, you have broken my covenant with all your abominations.
(וְלֹא שָׁמַרְתֶּם מִשְׁמַרְתִּי קִדְשִׁי) וְתָשִׂימוּן לְשֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁמַרְתִּי בְּמִקְדָּשִׁי לָכֶם:	8a b	(And you have not kept charge of my sacred things) / but you have set others to keep my charge in my sanctuary for you."
כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה כָּל־בְּנִי־נֹכַר עָרְלֵי לֵב וְעָרְלֵי בָשָׂר לֹא יָבֹאוּ אֶל־מִקְדָּשִׁי לְכָל־בְּנִי־נֹכַר אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:	9a b c	"Thus says the Lord YHWH: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, shall enter my sanctuary, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel,
	...	

וַיִּשְׁבְּנִי אֶל־פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת	47:1a	And he made me return to the entrance of the temple;
וְהָנָה־מַיִם יֹצְאִים מִתַּחַת מַקְטָן (הַבַּיִת) קִדְמָה	b	and behold: water was flowing out from below the threshold (of the temple) toward the east
כִּי־פָנֵי הַבַּיִת קִדְמִים	c	- for the temple faced east -
וְהַמַּיִם יֵרְדִים (מִתַּחַת) מִקֶּתֶף (הַבַּיִת) הַיְמָנִית מִגֹּב לַמִּזְבֵּחַ:	d	and the water was descending from (below) the right side (of the temple), south of the altar.
וַיּוֹצֵאֲנִי דֶרֶךְ־שַׁעַר צְפוֹנָה	2a	And he brought me out by way of the north gate,
וַיְסַבְּנִי דֶרֶךְ חוּץ אֶל־שַׁעַר (הַחוּץ)	b	and led me around on the outside to the (outer) gate facing toward the east;
<הַפּוֹנֶה דֶרֶךְ קִדְמִים> ³⁶		
וְהָנָה־מַיִם מִפְּכַיִם מִן־הַקֶּתֶף הַיְמָנִית:	c	and behold, water was trickling out on the right side.
בְּצֵאת־הָאִישׁ קִדְמִים	3a _p	While the man went on eastward,
וְקוֹ בְּיָדוֹ	b	with a cord in his hand,
וַיִּמְד אֶלֶף בָּאַמָּה	a	and he measured one thousand cubits,
וַיַּעֲבֵרֵנִי בַמַּיִם מִי אֶפְסוֹסִים: ³⁷	c	and led me through the water: ankle-deep water.
וַיִּמְד אֶלֶף	4a	and he measured one thousand,
וַיַּעֲבֵרֵנִי בַמַּיִם מִיִּם בְּרַכְּסִים	b	and led me through the water: knee-deep water.
וַיִּמְד אֶלֶף	c	and he measured one thousand,
וַיַּעֲבֵרֵנִי מִי מִתְּנָיִם:	d	and led me through: water up to the loins.
וַיִּמְד אֶלֶף	5a	and he measured one thousand:
(נַחַל)	b	(a river)
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־אוּכַל לַעֲבֹר	c	that I could not cross,
כִּי־גָאוּ הַמַּיִם	d	for the water had risen;
מִי שָׁחוּ (נַחַל)	e	water to swim in, (a river)
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעֲבֹר:	f	that could not be crossed.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי	6a	And he said to me,
הֲרֵאִיתָ בְּוַאֲדָם	b	“Have you seen this, son of man?”
וַיּוֹלֵכֵנִי	c	Then he made me return again along the bank of the
וַיִּשְׁבְּנִי שְׂפַת הַנַּחַל:	d	river.
בְּשׁוּבֵנִי	7a _p	As I returned,
וְהָנָה אֶל־שְׂפַת הַנַּחַל עֵץ רַב מְאֹד מִזֶּה וּמִזֶּה:	a	behold: on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי	8a	And he said to me,
הַמַּיִם הָאֵלֶּה יּוֹצְאִים אֶל־הַגְּלִילָה	b	“This water flows out toward the eastern region
הַקְּדֻמוֹנָה		
וַיֵּרְדוּ עַל־הָעֲרָבָה	c	and descends into the Arabah;
וּבָאוּ הַיָּמָה	d	and it enters the sea,
אֶל־הַיָּמָה הַמּוֹצְאִים ³⁸	e	- toward the sea it is being brought -
וַיִּנְרָפְאוּ הַמַּיִם:	f	and the seawater will be healed.

³⁶ Metathesis (MT reads הַפּוֹנֶה דֶרֶךְ קִדְמִים); with Cooke, *Ezekiel*, 522; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1187; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 273; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 193f.

³⁷ LXX obviously had problems translating מַי אֶפְסוֹסִים and transcribed ὕδωρ ἀφέσεως (water of a fountain); Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1187.

³⁸ The MT presents considerable difficulties; for comments, see e.g. Wevers, *Ezekiel*, 335; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 1188f; Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 273; Block, *Book of Ezekiel 25-48*, 688; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 194f.

וְהָיָה כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׂרָץ אֶל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יָבוֹא שָׁם <נַחַל> ³⁹ יִחְיֶה וְהָיָה הַדְּגָה רַבָּה מְאֹד כִּי בָּאוּ שָׁמָּה הַמַּיִם הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּרְפְּאוּ וְחַי כָּל־ אֲשֶׁר־יָבוֹא שָׁמָּה הַנַּחַל:	9a b ₁ c d b ₂ e f g h i	And this will be: every living creature that swarms; wherever <the river> goes to will live, and there will be very many fish; for this water enters there, and they will be healed; and everything will live wherever the river goes.
וְהָיָה יַעֲמְדוּ עָלָיו דּוֹגִים מֵעֵין גְּדִי וְעַד־עֵין עֲגֵלַיִם מִשְׁטוֹחַ לַחֲרָמִים יִהְיוּ לְמִינֵהּ תְּהִיָּה דְגָתָם כְּדֶגַת הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל רַבָּה מְאֹד:	10a b c d	And this will be: Fishermen will stand beside the sea from En-gedi to En-eglaim; a place for the spreading of nets it will be; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea.
[בְּצִאתוֹ וּגְבָאָיו וְלֹא יִרְפְּאוּ לְמַלַּח נִתְּנוּ:]	11a _p a b	[But its swamps and marshes, they will not be healed; they are to be left for salt.]
וְעַל־הַנַּחַל יַעֲלֶה עַל־שְׂפָתוֹ מִזֶּה וּמִזֶּה כָּל־עֵץ־מֵאֲכָל לֹא־יִבּוֹל עָלֵהוּ וְלֹא־יִתֵּם פְּרִי לְחֹדְשֵׁי יָבֵר כִּי מִמֵּי מִזְבֵּחַ־הַקֹּדֶשׁ הַזֶּה יוֹצֵאִים וְהָיוּ פְּרִי לְמֵאֲכָל וְעָלֵהוּ לְתִרְוָפָה: ס	12a b c d e _p e f ס	And along the river, there will grow, on one side and on the other, all trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them, it flows out from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”
[...]		

³⁹ MT has the dual נַחְלִים but the respective verb form (יָבוֹא) is singular, as is ὁ ποταμός in LXX. The dual seems to be a later adaptation to Zech 14:8. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, 274; Konkel, *Architektonik des Heiligen*, 195.

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